# As if the Wood of which it was built were Flesh: The House Motif in Faulkner.

Dissertation angefertigt von Dirk Bork
zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades der Philosophie

Vorgelegt im Fachbereich Sprachen und
Literaturwissenschaft der Universität Osnabrück

2007

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# Acknowledgements

This dissertation would have been impossible without the support of my advisor, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Karrer, whose thoughtful response to my project and the time he has taken from his busy schedule to read my manuscripts has been tremendously appreciated.

I also want to thank Dr. Lothar Ern for our long conversations about American fiction and culture.

Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Ricarda. Without her encouragement and aid I would not have completed this project.

# List of Abbreviations

| Publication | Abbreviation | Publishing Date |
|---|---|---|
| *Soldier's Pay* | SP | 1926 |
| *Mosquitoes* | MOS | 1927 |
| *Flags in the Dust* | FID | 1973 |
| *The Sound and the Fury* | SF | 1929 |
| *As I Lay Dying* | AILD | 1930 |
| *Sanctuary* | SAN | 1931 |
| *Light in August* | LIA | 1932 |
| *Pylon* | PYL | 1935 |
| *Absalom, Absalom!* | ABS | 1936 |
| *The Unvanquished* | UNV | 1938 |
| *The Wild Palms* | WP | 1939 |
| *The Hamlet* | HAM | 1940 |
| *Go Down, Moses* | GDM | 1942 |
| *Intruder in the Dust* | INT | 1948 |
| *Knight's Gambit* | KG | 1949 |
| *A Fable* | FAB | 1950 |
| *Collected Stories* | CS | 1951 |
| *Requiem for a Nun* | RFN | 1951 |
| *Big Woods* | BW | 1952 |
| *The Town* | TOW | 1957 |
| *The Mansion* | MAN | 1959 |
| *The Reivers* | REI | 1962 |
| *Uncollected Stories* | *US* | *1979* |
| *Faulkner in the University* | *FIU* | *1959* |
| *Selected Letters* | *SL* | *1977* |

All the publishing dates of Faulkner's short stories presented in the text of this dissertation refer to the earliest date a story is known to exist.

# 1. Introduction

Like many readers who have encountered Faulkner's fiction for the first time, I started reading Faulkner with "A Rose for Emily" and this story generated a growing and never ceasing fascination with the writings of the Southern author. Faulkner's style of writing is unique and the creation of his mythological domain of Yoknapatawpha County is still unsurpassed in American literature. Moreover, the variety of his subject matters and the richness of his characters will always invite fresh and new critical perspectives on his body of work. However, one particular aspect of his writings attracted my attention as soon as I read the short story "A Rose for Emily" for the first time: Faulkner's use of the house motif.

The landscape of Yoknapatawpha County is replete with all kinds of houses, ranging from big mansions of the plantation elite to Negro cabins and poor white sharecroppers' shacks. Faulkner's fictitious houses harbor a quality that makes them loom large in the reader's mind. Take, for instance, the decaying Grierson house that serves as a reminder of the vanished grandeur of the Old South, or the burning Sutpen mansion that reflects the downfall of the Old South, or think about Nancy's simple cabin that cannot protect her from her murderous husband. All these different types of houses leave the reader behind with indelible impressions a long time after having finished a Faulkner novel or short story.

The houses set within Yoknapatawpha County are more than mere shelters for their inhabitants – they are architectural metaphors demarcating class, race, and gender. As the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard asserts, "House images move in two directions: they are in us as much as we are in them" (1964, xxxiii). In the light of this, Faulkner's houses do visualize social structures by revealing a great deal of those who dwell in them. Carsten and Hugh-Jones likewise stress this assumption: "The house and the body are intimately linked. The house is an extension of the person; like an extra skin, carapace or second layer of clothes, it serves as much to reveal and display as it does to hide and protect" (1995, p.2). Kohn also stresses the significance of the house motif. According to him, it is important to note how Faulkner "uses the image of the house [...] as a symbol for the lives of the characters who live in or aspire to them" (1983, p.79).

In the past, literary criticism tended to regard the natural world as the central element in Faulkner's fiction and produced thus quite a bulk of research papers, books, and essays on this topic. Time and again, literary critics showed how single works of the Southern author are to be read in the context of the disappearance of nature as, for instance, the fourth chapter of "The Bear" in *Go Down, Moses*, the short story collection *Big Woods*, or "The Wilderness" section of the *Collected Stories* do demonstrate. For further information on this issue consult Christadler's *Natur und Geschichte im Werk von William Faulkner* (1962), *Faulkner and the Natural World* (1999) by Kartiganer and Abadie (eds.), and *Faulkner and the Ecology of the South* (2005) by Urgo and Abadie (eds.).

Unlike Faulkner's rendering of the natural world, the fictitious houses edifices of Yoknapatawpha County are mostly neglected by literary critics. Hines, one of three critics dealing solely with architecture in Faulkner's works so far, criticizes the disproportionate relation between published literary criticism on the role of nature on the one hand and available criticism on the function of built environments in Faulkner's writings on the other hand as follows:

> Much has been said and written on the ubiquity of nature in Faulkner's works – the woods, the bear, the natural landscape – but relatively little has been done on Faulkner's equally great interest in the built environment, the opposite of nature, as symbol and metaphor of larger issues, attitudes and moods. There is, in fact, throughout Faulkner criticism a puzzling imbalance between the attention given to nature and that given to architecture. This is unfortunate, since 'novelistic architecture,' according to critic William Ruzicka, 'has much to say about the way that characters view the world they inhabit, the effect of the fictive environment upon those who live within it, the image and significance of a fictive place, and the meaning of dwelling there' [Ruzicka 1987, p.2] (1996, p.2).

As this dissertation will show, an analysis of Faulkner's fictitious houses is undeniably as significant for an understanding of the Yoknapatawpha saga as an analysis of its imaginary natural world – or maybe even more important. Although the disappearance of nature and the appearance of more and more built structures in Faulkner's fictional world are in fact two sides of the same coin, it still amazes the reader that one aspect is fully researched whereas the other is not.

The critical evaluation of Faulkner's works began in the late 1930s. This coincided with the rise of the New Criticism with "whose values and methods [Faulkner's] works were basically compatible" (Grimwood 1986, p.101). Outstanding among older treatments of Faulkner's writings is O'Donnell's article "Faulkner's Mythology" (1939). This essay, which divides Faulkner's world into Snopeses and Sartorises and thus into "the amoral and ethical" (Meriwether 1973, p.235), principally presents Faulkner as a maker of myths [through analysis of his symbolism]. Likewise, Faulkner's first exegetes like Brooks, Warren, Millgate, and Vickery published books on Faulkner that belong still today to the most useful and probably best critical studies ever made of Faulkner's writings.

After Faulkner's Nobel Price Speech, in which the awarded emphasized rather universal values like individualism and existentialism, Faulkner scholarship soon tended to explore Southern reality in his works – as indicated by the different themes of the annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference [see, for instance, *The South and Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha: The Actual and the Apocryphal* (1976) or *Faulkner and the Southern Renaissance* (1981)].

The publication of *New Directions in Faulkner Studies* (1983), which "demonstrates an urge to depart from the New Critical past and illustrates the basically conservative temperament of Faulkner studies" (Grimwood 1986, p.101), demarcates a paradigm shift in Faulkner scholarship. Since then, Faulkner criticism neglected the analysis of rather abstract ideas and focuses instead on the study of single concrete themes and motifs in the Southerner's writings – as indicated by such books as *Faulkner and Humor* (1984), *Faulkner and Women* (1985), *Faulkner and Race* (1986), and *Faulkner and Gender* (1994), for example. Based on the annual conferences, these books are fine explorations of Southern reality and history as rendered in Faulkner's fictional world. A survey illustrating the changing critical approaches to read and to understand Faulkner offers Caron's article "Faulkner's Critical Reception" in *A Companion to Faulkner* (2007).

Although this dissertation belongs to the bulk of Faulkner criticism that focuses on a single theme or motif to analyze the complex realities of Faulkner's fictional world, this study of the house in Faulkner nonetheless also highlights the issues class, race, and gender, which are inseparably linked to this literary motif.

The more I read Faulkner's writings, the more I sensed the recurrent use of house imagery in his novels and short stories. However, this phenomenological approach to Faulkner finally led to the question whether the house motif is central to a comprehension of Faulkner's oeuvre. Furthermore, I wanted to know why house imagery occurs so frequently in Faulkner and which different purposes all these fictitious houses serve in the Yoknapatawpha context.

I use the concept of the 'Grounded Theory' by Glaser and Strauss. 'Grounded Theory' provides a "scientific method concerned with the generation, elaboration, and validation of social science theory" (Haig 1995). This method combines "by an analytic procedure of constant comparison" the analyst's coding and analysis of data with the permanent inspection of these data in order to redesign a developing theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p.102). As Glaser and Strauss explain, "the purpose of the constant comparative method of joint coding and analysis is to generate theory more systematically […] *by using explicit coding and analytic procedures*" (1967, p.102). 'Grounded Theory', also referred to as 'constant comparative method', is useful in generating a theory in four different stages – each of which will be explained in the following text.

Stage 1: *Comparing incidents applicable to each category.*

To support my thesis that the house motif is a significant or maybe the central element in Faulkner, I consulted the concordances to Faulkner's novels and short stories to base my assumption on statistical evidence. My next step was to compile statistics showing the most frequently occurring words used in all these novels and short stories [see appendix].

Employing thus a positivist approach, I was able to get data revealing how often a certain word as, for instance, 'house' occurs within every single text. In addition to that, I discovered several words that build up the semantic group 'house', which includes related vocabulary as, for instance, 'home', 'window', and 'door'.

The table on the following page highlights the occurrence of these words in Faulkner's writings.

**Table 1**: Occurrence of the word ‘house’ and house related vocabulary in Faulkner’s novels and stories [see appendix for more statistical data].

| Book: | House | Home | Window | Door | Room | Wall |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Soldier’s Pay* | 66 | 45 | 52 | 98 | 60 | 13 |
| *Mosquitoes* | 15 | 16 | 19 | 82 | 90 | 25 |
| *Flags in the Dust* | 161 | 95 | 100 | 212 | 179 | 49 |
| *The Sound and the Fury* | 142 | 87 | 72 | 196 | 86 | 45 |
| *As I Lay Dying* | 98 | 27 | 23 | 50 | 16 | 10 |
| *Sanctuary* | 201 | 68 | 54 | 291 | 154 | 61 |
| *Light in August* | 309 | 105 | 104 | 237 | 117 | 38 |
| *Pylon* | 20 | 73 | 46 | 96 | 67 | 29 |
| *Absalom, Absalom!* | 272 | 96 | 48 | 102 | 77 | 19 |
| *The Unvanquished* | 122 | 85 | 20 | 71 | 41 | 8 |
| *The Wild Palms* | 70 | 27 | 33 | 113 | 57 | 29 |
| *The Hamlet* | 209 | 134 | 36 | 136 | 86 | 36 |
| *Go Down, Moses* | 176 | 100 | 23 | 97 | 98 | 19 |
| *Intruder in the Dust* | 75 | 67 | 26 | 96 | 35 | 19 |
| *Requiem for a Nun* | 45 | 28 | 12 | 105 | 68 | 19 |
| *A Fable* | 50 | 81 | 42 | 194 | 117 | 74 |
| *The Town* | 162 | 156 | 48 | 137 | 66 | 21 |
| *The Mansion* | 178 | 201 | 90 | 118 | 110 | 26 |
| *The Reivers* | 100 | 114 | 23 | 102 | 74 | 18 |
| *Collected Stories* | 436 | 270 | 118 | 350 | 195 | 83 |

The result was surprising. The frequent occurrences of these words as evidenced by the statistics make clear that the use of house imagery is in fact a significant feature in most of Faulkner's writings. It is also striking that those novels which are considered to be his finest works like *The Sound and the Fury, As I Lay Dying, Light in August,* and *Absalom, Absalom!,* as well as many stories in the *Collected Stories* share a particularly high occurrence of the word 'house' and related vocabulary, whereas minor works as, for example, *Soldier's Pay* or *Pylon*, have a relatively rare occurrence of these words in common.

However, one has to look at every single occurrence of these words in the original texts because concordances cut words loose from their contexts and cannot distinguish between the mere occurrence of a word ["She saw a house, a brook, and a tree"], and the use of a word embedded within a broader context ["She was barred in her house"].

As a consequence, I reread all Faulkner novels and short story collections and coded all pages featuring house imagery with some annotations ['H' for 'house', 'win' for windows, 'b-win' for "barred behind windows", for instance]. My next step was to open up computer files where I put down notes concerning Faulkner's use of houses and related architectural phenomena [doors, windows, attics, porches, and fences] as detected in his writings. This led to the creation of the core category 'house' and several properties [sub-categories] as, for instance, types of houses [mansion, cabin, middle class house]. These computer files were supplied with excerpts taken from Faulkner's books – added with my annotations. The example below shows data gathered in the computer file 'decaying houses':

| Source: | Page: | Text: | Annotations and Links: |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Sanctuary* [SAN] | p.8 | the house was a gutted ruin rising gaunt… | a decaying house with Gothic overtones |
| "Mistral" [CS] | p.857 | the nave, groined upward into the gloom, … | a dark church bearing Gothic qualities [see Volpe 2004, p.50] |

On the one hand, these files offer a brief survey of all collected data and, on the other hand, they give the analyst the chance to compare related data very easily – which is needed for the next step. As Glaser and Strauss write, "*while coding* [to

put down notes and write memos] *an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category"*(1967, p.106). This act of constantly comparing related data enables the analyst to trace recurrent patterns in his subject matter. As a result of comparing data, I discovered several recurrent patterns in Faulkner. For instance, I repeatedly traced the image of a character trapped within a tomb- or prison-like house. At the same time, while putting down notes explaining how architectural phenomena such as doors, windows, or porches are linked with characters, I detected other recurrent patterns in Faulkner's writings as well [see also table on page 211].

Stage 2: *Integrating categories and their properties.*

This stage includes the sorting of the collected data according to various aspects, which leads to the establishment of categories. Although houses mainly demarcate class, race, and gender, it became apparent that a further scientific analysis of the recurrent motif "house" has to be based on different concepts. Thus, I structured the chapters of my dissertation on the basis of the categories that have evolved during the process of gathering and comparing data. On the one hand, I have to distinguish between public houses [jail, courthouse, brothel, store, church, bank, barbershop] and private houses of different types [mansion, middle class house, cabin]; on the other hand, the coded data also evidenced the necessity to analyze Faulkner's use of windows, doors, attics, porches, and fences. All these categories became the basis for the analysis that follows.

Stage 3: *Delimiting the theory.*

According to Glaser and Strauss, delimiting occurs at two levels: the theory and the categories:

> First, the theory solidifies, in the sense that major modifications become fewer and fewer as the analyst compares the next incidents of a category to its properties. Later modifications are mainly on the order of clarifying the logic, integrating elaborating details of properties into the major outline of interrelated categories and – most important – by reduction. […]
>
> The second level for delimiting the theory is a reduction in the original list of categories for coding. As the theory grows, becomes reduced, and increasingly works better for ordering a mass of qualitative data, the analyst becomes committed to it. […]

> Another factor, which still further delimits the list of categories, is that they become *theoretically saturated*. After an analyst has coded incidents for the same category for a number of times, he learns to see quickly whether or not the next applicable incident points to a new aspect. If yes, the incident is coded and compared. If no, the incident is not coded, since it only adds bulk to the coded data and nothing to the theory (1967, pp.110, 111).

In the context of this dissertation, I had to reduce several categories. For instance, I skipped analyzing the rubric 'walls' and 'home' because these categories do not really contribute to a deeper understanding of the core category 'house'. Instead, they would just add bulk to the collected data and make it difficult to develop a theory. Moreover, I also subsumed various rubrics under one single category. For instance, I subsumed the properties 'decaying houses', 'haunted houses' and 'Gothicism' under the category 'Image of the house in Faulkner's Gothic stories'.

Stage 4: *Writing theory.*

"At this stage in the process of qualitative analysis, the analyst possesses coded data, a series of memos, and a theory" (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p.113). On the basis of my coded data and memos, I was able to start writing and furthering my thesis with the collated memos about every single category. My thesis, then, is that Yoknapatawpha County is a segregated and house-based society in which houses and related imagery are used to demarcate class, race, and gender.

I decided to use the 'Grounded Theory' by Glaser and Strauss because this method allows one to discover a theory in the data. Due to the procedure of constantly comparing data, Glaser and Strauss's method proves to be a dynamic process that permanently questions the validity of a certain given thesis. As Böhme states: "[this method] erlaubt auf der Basis empirischer Forschung in einem bestimmten Gegenstandsbereich, eine dafür geltende Theorie zu formulieren, die aus vernetzten Konzepten besteht und geeignet ist, eine Beschreibung und Erklärung der untersuchten sozialen Phänomene zu liefern" (2000, p.476). This method thus avoids mistakes that are inherent in other methods based on naïve positivism: to let the analyst discover whatever he wants to see in his material. Summing up, 'Grounded Theory' helps to make sense of collected data and helps to manage the situation better. I took information about

this method from *Qualitative Forschung. Ein Handbuch* edited by U. Flick. Böhme's article "Theoretisches Codieren: Textanalyse in der Grounded Theory" is proved helpful for further research. The standard literature about this method is Glaser and Anselm's *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (1967). This book shows the important features of this method and contrasts grounded theories with grand [logico-deductive] theories. In *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (1990), Strauss and Corbin show approaches to data collection. Their study also emphasizes interpretation and theory building.

Of course, this dissertation is not only based on a joint quantitative and qualitative approach – this dissertation also takes into consideration what other critics have noted about the house motif in Faulkner. Yet in the light of an empirical approach to Faulkner's use of the house motif, it is striking that this facet of his work is still not well researched by the academic world – despite the fact that five novels, two short stories, and one section of the *Collected Stories* are entitled with names sharing architectural implications: *Sanctuary, The Hamlet, The Town, The Mansion, Pylon,* "Barn Burning", "Artist at Home", and "The Village" section. As Berger notes, "not by coincidence, many of these [pieces of writings] have architecturally suggestive titles and themes […] [to] make pointed use of the architectural spaces within the house and their metaphorical meanings for individual characters" (2003, p.25). The following survey lists those critics who have analyzed the use of houses in Faulkner's novels and short stories so far.

Elizabeth Kerr offers a brief treatment of some important houses in Faulkner's fiction in her critically less acclaimed book *Yoknapatawpha: Faulkner's "Little Postage Stamp of Native Soil"* (1969). In chapter three of her book, Kerr presents the town Jefferson and shows the significance of some public and private houses like, for example, some mansions, the jail and the courthouse. Serving as an introduction for the inexperienced reader into Faulkner's world, Kerr's study merely points out parallels between actual buildings in Lafayette County and fictitious buildings in Yoknapatawpha. Kerr's book builds on earlier studies on this issue published by Miner (1952), Dain (1964), and Brown (1962). Unfortunately, Mrs. Kerr too often equates fact with fiction in her analysis.

By contrast, Watson's article "Faulkner: The House of Fiction" (1980) illustrates Faulkner's use of specific houses and how they serve his sense of place and form, especially in the novels *As I Lay Dying, The Sound and the Fury,* and *Sanctuary*. According to Watson, Faulkner uses houses "not merely as picturesque regional backdrops or stage sets but as complex symbolic forms" (1980, p.135). In addition, Faulkner's houses and architectural images are "a habitual mode of expression and a characteristic vehicle of extended metaphors for fictional form" (1980, p.139). As a result, Faulkner's houses are to be seen as "complex and expressive symbolic figures: fictional places that are fictional forms" (p.158).

In chapter eleven of his book, *L'esprit du Sud dans l'oeuvre de Faulkner* (1982), entitled "La maison maléfique", Jean Rouberol highlights the Gothic qualities of houses in *Sanctuary, Absalom, Absalom!, Light in August*, and "A Rose for Emily". According to Rouberol, "*de cette maison des ténèbres, Faulkner nous donne une image non seulement imposante et récurrente, mais diversifiée. Elle est tantôt lieu de violence et de mort, tantôt symbole d'une malédiction ancestrale, tantôt enfin cercueil ou tombeau de morts-vivants*" (1982, p.268). In focusing on the significance of the "Dark House" aspect in Faulkner's oeuvre, this chapter of Rouberol's book virtually serves as a model for Polk's later essay, "Children of the Dark House" (1996), though it is not based on Freud [see below].

A valuable study analyzing the image of the house in the *Collected Stories* is Freywald's *Untersuchungen zur Symbolik in den Kurzgeschichten William Faulkners* (1983). Basing on O'Donnell's early essay "Faulkner's Mythology" Freywald's study belongs to the bulk of literary criticism which focuses on mythology and symbolism in Faulkner's works. Yet unlike those early critics, Freywald also traces and examines universal aspects like individualism and existentialism in Faulkner's third short story volume. Basically, Freywald's study highlights the significance of space in the context of the *Collected Stories* and she considers the house and related spatial imagery like caves as archetypal images. Freywald is the first critic who notes the significance and function of spatial boundaries such as, for instance, doors and windows in Faulkner's oeuvre. In addition to that, this critic links house imagery to a character's ability or inability to see and offers thus new insights into Faulkner's art of character delineation.

Ruzicka's book-length study *Faulkner's Fictive Architecture: The Meaning of Place in the Yoknapatawpha Novels* (1987) analyzes the function of fictitious architecture and interior design of some selected houses in Yoknapatawpha. Ruzicka's book expresses the thesis that Yoknapatawpha County is the "fictive embodiment of the classical vision of [Faulkner's] milieu" (1987, p.6). On the one hand, Ruzicka's book is useful to understand Faulkner's sense of architecture and space but, on the other hand, it puts too much stress on Greek Revival architecture and neglects other architectural styles used in Yoknapatawpha County. Moreover, Ruzicka focuses on just a few houses: the Sartoris mansion, Sutpen's Hundred, and the McCaslin plantation. Ruzicka's approach to Faulkner's house imagery is phenomenological. This becomes especially apparent in his rendering of floor plans for the Sartoris houses – which are hence of questionable scientific value. In addition to that, Ruzicka chiefly links house imagery to character delineation.

Gutting's analysis of fictional space in *Yoknapatawpha. The Function of Geographical and Historical Facts in William Faulkner's Fictional Picture of the Deep South* (1992) offers a comprehensive survey of Faulkner's fictitious houses. Although Gutting's study also presents a comparison of the fictional space of Yoknapatawpha County and the actual space of Lafayette County as done by Kerr and Miner, for instance, her book, by contrast, is a full-scale analysis of this issue. Gutting not only distinguishes between public and private spaces in Yoknapatawpha, but she also considers these spaces in a historical context. Thus she uses a spatio-temporal or, according to Bakthin, chronotopic approach to her analysis of Yoknapatawpha. On the other hand, Gutting perceives house imagery chiefly as a means to delineate characters or to express time and thus history. Therefore, almost no light at all is shed on the role of houses in the contexts of class, race, and gender. Moreover, her study is slightly marred by a lack of familiarity with Faulkner's writings other than his novels for she examines public and private spaces in only nine Faulkner short stories from the *Collected Stories*, and she ignores, apart from "A Rose for Emily" and "Dry September", the rich substance of house imagery in "The Village" section. Gutting's book takes all the aforesaid studies published by Kerr, Watson, Rouberol, Freywald, and Ruzicka in consideration and enlarges them with her analysis of built structures in Faulkner.

In *William Faulkner and Southern History* (1993), Williamson shows that Faulkner "early evolved a symbology in which buildings stood for artificial, man-made institutions" whereas "the 'outdoors' stood for the natural order. […] Very often to go into a house or building was to attempt to enter the modern world and deal with it on its own terms, to go out was to abandon that effort and seek salvation in nature" ([1993] 1995, pp.413, 414). Although Williamson's observation is essentially right, this author unfortunately neither illustrates this statement with examples nor does he base this thesis on any textual evidence.

Thomas Hines' book *William Faulkner and the Tangible Past* (1996) is another analysis of the architecture of Yoknapatawpha County. Unlike Ruzicka, Hines' study highlights the different architectural styles employed in Faulkner's books [vernacular architecture, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, postbellum and modernist architecture], and shows how these fictitious houses reflect the actual architecture of Oxford, Mississippi and neighboring areas. As this author notes, this book shows how "the built environment served Faulkner as a background and foreground, as symbol and subject, in the long, grand, diachronic sweep of the Yoknapatawpha narrative" (1996, xiv). Like Ruzicka, however, Hines is rather interested in giving a portrayal of Faulkner's fictive architecture than in analyzing the symbolic meaning of house imagery in that author's novels and short stories. Thus, Hines' study has nothing to say about the use of Faulkner's fictitious houses in terms of class, race, and gender. Hines' examination of Faulkner's houses is based on a phenomenological approach, as well, and studies from Dain, Haynes [not available] (1985), Lawrence and Hise (1993), Ruzicka, and Miner are quoted.

In his essay "Children of the Dark House" (1996), Noel Polk analyzes Faulkner's recurrent use of houses as a symbol for dysfunctional families ["dark houses"]. Unlike Rouberol's analysis "La maison maléfique", Polk's essay offers a Freudian perspective on Faulkner's early fiction and explains his use of the "dark house" motif – a term coined by Polk to describe houses in which children do experience (or have experienced) mental pain due to a lack of parental care or love. In this respect, Polk asserts that Faulkner's houses are…

> […] dark houses indeed, given the secrets they contain and what those secrets do to the families that live in them. Faulkner's fiction is a

> house-haunted landscape, a terrain marked by structures ranging from shotgun sharecropper shacks, ephemeral and poisonous as mushrooms, to antebellum mansions […]. Children in Faulkner's work of the period 1927-1932 are prisoners in the dark house of family dysfunction, houses whose darkness is rooted in fear and loathing of the life processes of sex and death, in denial and repression of desire. The dysfunction is Oedipal in its origins and in its more particular manifestations (Polk [1996] 1998, pp. 25, 29).

Polk's essay is a good vantage point for studying the use of houses in Faulkner's writings. Polk's essay highlights the image of the dark house both in well-known novels [e.g. *Sanctuary, Light in August, Absalom, Absalom!*] as well as in lesser-known short stories. Moreover, Polk also refers to the significance of Faulkner's use of windows and doors – although not as elaborately done as exemplified by Freywald. Unfortunately, Polk's essay considers the house motif just from one single perspective. He regards dark houses as prison-like edifices in which life is terrible for children. Polk does not quote from the aforesaid sources.

Berger's dissertation *Dark Houses: Navigating Space and Negotiating Silence in the Novels of Faulkner, Warren, and Morrison* (2003) examines the ways in which Faulkner, Warren, and Morrison appropriate the house as metaphor and shows how these authors constructed a complex relationship between gender, space, and language. Considering fictional houses from the point of view of arche-typal and phenomenological architecture, Berger asserts that a house contains a spirit of place, a *genius loci*, and she emphasizes that that spirit is a feminine one (2003, p.10). Based both on a phenomenological approach and on Heidegger's concept of dwelling as a way of expressing *being-in-the-world* ["dwelling is the basic character of Being" (Heidegger 1971, 160)], Berger's study highlights the significance of gendered spaces in both *Absalom, Absalom!* and "Evangeline" while analyzing binary oppositions such as, for instance, masculine-feminine, self-other, inside-outside divisions and differences between public and private spheres. As a consequence, Berger considers Sutpen's Hundred as a phallic façade that stands in contrast to the femininity of its inner spaces. Yet this argument is not very convincing since even the interior of this mansion can also be seen as a representation of the patriarch Thomas Sutpen himself. Like Polk, Berger neither refers to nor quotes from those studies presented above.

Apart from these books and articles that deal with the house motif in Faulkner in general, there are also some articles that analyze the use of houses in some selected novels or short stories. However, the bulk of these articles is mostly concerned with Faulkner's rendering of the Grierson house, the De Spain respectively Flem Snopes mansion, or Sutpen's Hundred – as will be seen in the following. This lack of a unifying study focusing upon the house motif in Faulkner's writings mandates a further critical inquiry into this subject matter.

Although a few articles dealing with window-, door-, or porch imagery in some Faulkner stories are available now, there is still no research paper published which offers an intense treatment of a single architectural feature as, for instance, the door or fence motif in Faulkner's oeuvre. This lack of critical research justifies an extensive analysis of these architectural features in Faulkner's oeuvre.

Those who are interested in parallels between actual houses in Lafayette County, Mississippi and fictitious houses in Yoknapatawpha County are advised to consult Hayne's *William Faulkner: His Lafayette County Heritage: Lands, Houses and Businesses* (1992), and *Faulkner's County: Yoknapatawpha* (1964) by J. Dain. These two books offer photographs that are useful to get an understanding of Yoknapatawpha. Miner's *The World of William Faulkner* (1952) parallels and contrasts Lafayette County with Yoknapatawpha County in texts.

To summarize briefly, literary criticism has predominantly analyzed houses in Faulkner's fiction from a phenomenological perspective (Freywald, Rouberol, Ruzicka, Watson, and Hines). In contrast to them, Kerr employs a sociological approach to render her idea of Yoknapatawpha County. Berger, by contrast, links her phenomenological approach to gender studies and to Heidegger's concept of dwelling but, like Ruzicka, she perceives house imagery chiefly as a means to delineate characters. Similarly, Gutting links house imagery to character delineation as well, but her chronotopical approach also takes the historical dimension of Faulkner's built structures in consideration. Thus, Gutting is able to highlight the evolution of Yoknapatawpha County. Polk's study, however, analyzes Faulkner's fictitious houses from a Freudian perspective. Polk shows how house imagery and related architectural features as windows and doors, for instance, are used to render male and female exclusion from society.

As this brief survey demonstrates, some efforts have already been made to analyze the function of house imagery in Faulkner's work. And as can be seen above, with the exception of Kerr's dated study, there is still no publication available which focuses on the house motif as a means to explore the social reality of Yoknapatawpha. None of all the books and articles published so far offers a comprehensive analysis of the house motif in connection with the issues class, race, and gender. And this is exactly what this dissertation aims to do.

Considering the house motif as the central metaphor in Faulkner to designate class differences, racial segregation, and inequality between the sexes in Yoknapatawpha, this dissertation is based on Lévi-Strauss' socio-anthropological concept of a house-based society to make clear how houses are used to organize and structure the patriarchal society of Yoknapatawpha County [see chapter 4]. And unlike the studies presented above, this dissertation uses a joint quantitative and qualitative approach to verify striking phenomena on the basis of empirical data – which enables the analyst to substantiate his findings and to establish connections between the different categories quite easily while coding data taken from Faulkner's texts.

Unlike Faulkner's fictitious houses, Faulkner's concern with his own house is well researched and documented. Blotner, for instance, gives a precise account of how Faulkner purchased and remodeled his antebellum mansion, Rowan Oak. When Faulkner had bought the rundown Shegog clapboard house in 1930, he renovated this two-storied Greek Revival house and turned it into a home which clearly expressed his sense of place (Blotner 1991, pp.260-263). Built in the 1840s, the old Shegog house was considered a grand mansion for its time and place, with a portico and four two-story columns, but it was decaying and needed repair. According to Williamson, Faulkner was "doing much of the work himself, installing support beams, plumbing, heating, and wiring day by day after he had finished a morning of writing" (1995, p.4).

Williams also refers to the history of this house which was "barely fit for chickens" when Faulkner bought it in 1930 for $6,000 (2005, p.12) [see also Lawrence and Hise's book *Faulkner's Rowan Oak* (1990)]. It took Faulkner three decades to repair, expand and tweak the house and grounds until he saw it fit:

> Upstairs, he added a sleeping couch and razed a wall to create a private entrance to his bedroom, leaving a funky conjunction of staircases and parallel halls. Once, while his family was out of town, he added his office and the back hall. To the portico he attached brick patios like wings. The patios diluted the whole Greek Revival style, fostered rot and threatened to undermine the most important artifact of all: the house itself (Williams 2005, p.12).

Faulkner lived and worked in Rowan Oak through thirty-two years. Today, Rowan Oak is open to the public and guests can watch the interior of his home in order to learn more about the author. At the same time, Faulkner's interest in his own house is also a vantage point to comprehend the meanings of his fictitious houses. After Faulkner's death in 1962, his daughter Jill stated that this house was "the symbol in Pappy's life of being somebody. […] everybody in Oxford had remembered that Pappy's father ran a livery stable, and this was just a way of thumbing his nose at Oxford. […] [It was] a nice old house [that] had a certain substance and standing to it" (Blotner 1991, p.261). In view of Jill Faulkner's remark, it appears as if Faulkner himself had also felt the need to own a stately mansion in order to show his personal achievement and success – in the very same way as characters such as Thomas Sutpen or Flem Snopes have realized that they need a splendid house to express their respectability to the community.

To understand the significance of the house motif in Faulkner's writings, it is important to understand the role and function of architecture in the Deep South. This is why chapter 3 provides basic knowledge about the different styles of Southern architecture like Greek Revival or Colonial Georgian, for instance.

Although the reader will be presented with sixteen different chapters exploring house imagery in Faulkner's oeuvre, all these chapters are linked with each other. Despite the fact that each chapter deals with a certain individual aspect, one has to bear in mind that all these different aspects are in fact subcategories of one single core category: the house motif in Faulkner.

This will be explained with an example. The decaying Grierson house is clearly a symbol of the Old South. Thus, it represents the vanishing order of the Old South. At the same time, this house is also the place where Mr. Grierson has imprisoned his daughter in order to make her stay in his household. This becomes

apparent in the way Mr. Grierson blocks the front door that keeps Miss Emily away from the young men of the village. Seen this way, then, the Grierson house is also symbolic of female entrapment in a patriarchal society. Furthermore, Miss Emily needs the windows of her house in order to be seen by the community who still respects and admires her. Window imagery is thus instrumental in conveying Miss Emily's relationship with the village she lives in.

Thus, it becomes clear that each chapter reveals details, which in their entirety will provide the reader with a coherent picture showing the complex nature of the house motif in Faulkner [see also chapter 4].

Chapter 5 offers information about the house motif in American literature in general.

In chapter 6, the reader will experience the significance of the house motif and related imagery in the Yoknapatawpha context. This chapter first draws attention to the use of house imagery in Faulkner's early short stories which were clearly inspired by the conventions of the Gothic tradition. Chapter 6.1 then highlights the nature of Faulkner's private houses. These houses will be analyzed in the following order: plantation houses [economic system of the Old South], mansions [upper class], town houses [middle class / symbolic of male and female entrapment], and cabins [lower class / symbolic of black culture]. This approach exhibits likewise the social stratification of Faulkner's imaginary world.

In the next chapter of this dissertation, the focus is set upon public houses. Chapter 6.2 discusses the significance of stores [commerce and entertainment], the courthouse [political power structure, symbol of justice and communality], the jail [place to keep law-breakers], banks [power and control], barbershops [mostly used as place for male gossip], churches [place to worship God], and brothels [either prison-like edifices for females or centers for male amusement].

The subsequent chapter 6.3 highlights the symbolic meaning of some selected architectural elements such as attics [inner spaces, stress of verticality], doors and windows [borderlines, liminal spaces], as well as porches and fences [outer spaces, stress of horizontality].

Finally, the conclusion in chapter 7 presents a recapitulation and interpretation of the results provided in the previous chapters.

# 2. The Literary Motif

Although the term 'motif' describes a basic element of literary texts and is thus a common term in literary criticism, definitions of this term vary widely. In his book *Die Wissenschaft von der Dichtung*, Petersen asserts, "Das Motiv ist der meist gebrauchte und deshalb unklarste Begriff, der bei der Analyse sich einstellt. Kaum ein anderes Wort wird so unmotiviert zur Anwendung gebracht. Man hat es ein Schwammwort genannt, weil es alles aufsaugt und alles mit ihm sich ausdrücken lässt" (1939, p.45). Petersen's statement seems to be valid even today for there is still no single generally accepted or applicable definition of this term at hand – even though much research on the essence and function of literary motifs has been done in recent years, as this chapter shows.

To begin with, Abrams considers the literary motif as a "conspicuous element, such as a type of incident, device, reference, or formula, which occurs frequently in works of literature" (1993, p.121). As a vantage point for a more complete definition of this term, Abram's rather vague definition highlights at least two important facets of this stylistic device. On the one hand, the motif can be regarded as a type of incident or image and, on the other hand, a motif has to be a recurrent phenomenon within a single work of fiction. Nevertheless, this definition leaves much to be said.

Wolpers, for instance, presents a very different definition of this term: "A literary motif may be any imaginative unit based on perception, sensation, and/or feeling [...]. It can be handed down by tradition, usually connected with literary modes or genre patterns, and may often be modified in later periods by individual authors and/or literary movements and schools" (1993, p.80). For this critic, who considers the motif both as a structural content unit of its own and as a structuring component in a text in which it occurs, the literary motif is closely connected with the time and culture an author lives in: "[...] every primary motif, if 'actualized' in a work of literature, is bound to be rendered in a more or less contemporary and personal fashion and thus be related to the culture, taste, and author-concerned. It will appear clothed, so to speak, in new and ever-changing garments" (1993, p.80). Seen in this light, literary motifs are in a state of constant change because

every author modifies a certain motif according to individual purposes based on the author's temporal and cultural background. Yet Wolper's definition also fails to make clear one of the motif's most important qualities: to act symbolically.

This is not to say that the symbol and the motif are synonyms. As Daemmrich and Daemmrich point out, "As archetypal phenomena of the human mind, motifs can assume symbolic meaning, as for instance, the motif of the dragon killer that symbolizes attempts to tame chaos. Unlike symbols, motifs are not ambiguous in meaning. Therefore they do not lend themselves to conflicting interpretations" (1994, p.9). Freedman likewise states that the motif may be symbolic and he distinguishes the symbol from the motif thus, "the symbol may occur singly" whereas "the motif is necessarily recurrent" (1996, p.202).

Yet Freedman's endeavor to define the literary motif fails in the end, too. For him, the literary motif is "a recurrent theme, character, or verbal pattern, but it may also be a family or associational cluster of literal or figurative references to a given class of objects, whether it be animals, machines, circles, music, or whatever" (1993, p.206). A motif can never be a theme because the term theme describes a completely different concept. A theme designates a text's "central idea, the element which organizes the author's material, or content, into the form of a literary work and represents the complete action with a beginning, development, and conclusion" (Daemmrich and Daemmrich 1994, p.2).

The Daemmrichs, who state that motifs perform essential functions in literary works that cannot be assumed by other elements (1994, p.11), also come up with a definition of the motif. Their definition of this term provides the terminological vantage point for the analysis of the house motif in this work:

> Die verschiedenen Festlegungen des Begriffs [of the motif] reichen somit von der Charakterisierung allgemeiner menschlicher Gedanken bis zur Funktion als situationsgebundene Details. Übereinstimmung herrscht nur dahingehend, dass Motive Strukturelemente sind, die konkretisiert in der Tradition fortleben. Wir definieren Motiv als elementares, bildlich gefasstes oder situationsgegliedertes Grundelement literarischer Werke. Es fängt Konflikte ein und fördert dadurch die Spannung. Seine Dynamik beruht auf bildhafter oder situationeller Verknüpfung mit einer geistigen Komponente, die assoziativ in der textlichen Wiederholung den Aktionsradius des Motivs erweitert (1978, p.18).

This definition comprises several qualities of the motif. For one thing, motifs are recurrent and structural phenomena within a work of fiction. Secondly, motifs are images, bound to situations. Finally, motifs capture conflicts of a literary text. This reflection on the essence of literary motifs as provided by the Daemmrichs fits my method of coding and linking categories.

The house motif itself belongs to the category of motifs of place and localities. Wolpe notes that primary motifs as the house motif take on "varying forms in the different content division". In this respect, Wolpers writes that motifs of localities typical of individuals [single room, flat, or study] or people in close relationships [hut, home of a family, secret meeting place] do differ from those of society as a whole [village, town, city, street, square, hotel, theater, royal palace, court] (1995, p.49). Likewise, the Daemmrichs also consider the house motif as a spatial motif and provide basic data about the occurrence and function of the house motif in their vast compendium, *Themes and Motifs in Western Literature*.

Further problems of defining the literary motif are dealt with in Vanhelleputte's article, "The concept of Motif in Literature: A Terminological Study" in *The Return of Thematic Criticism*, Freedman's paper "The Literary Motif" in *Essentials of the Theory of Fiction*, and in Horst S. Daemmrich's article, "Themes and Motifs in Literature: Approaches – Trends – Definitions".

Moreover, the Daemmrichs' books *Wiederholte Spiegelungen: Themen und Motive in der Literatur, Themes and Motifs in Western Literature,* and *Spirals and Circles: A Key to Thematic Patterns in Classicism and Realism* provide good insight into the function and categorization of motifs. Likewise, Wolper's study, "Recognizing and Classifying Literary Motifs" in *Thematics Reconsidered,* is a useful article that establishes a classification system of motifs. Information about certain individual motifs is presented in Frenzel's compendium *Motive der Weltliteratur*, and in Seigneuret's *Dictionary of Literary Themes and Motifs.*

# 3. Southern Architecture

In the prologue to their book *The Architecture of America. A Social and Cultural History*, the authors Burchard and Bush-Brown assert: “Architecture provides symbols for society but it does not invent them, for symbols come from the roots and the soil, not from the mind” (1961, p.8). According to these authors, architecture may provide functional and structural forms [houses, places], but it is society itself which charges buildings with symbolic meanings. In this respect, Southern architecture with its amalgam of different styles was a complex and many-layered system of built structures that were charged by the society with symbolic meanings. Nowadays, one can see Southern architecture as an organizing and structuring principle that was used to make distinctions between the different classes and races. Due to the severe climatic and economic conditions of the South, a certain kind of architecture evolved that did not only help people to cope with heat; it was also the expression of a way of life very different from those in the Northern states. This has been seen in Davidson’s essay, “A Mirror for Artists”, published in the controversial book *I’ll Take My Stand*:

> The South has always had a native architecture, adapted from classic models into something distinctly Southern; and nothing more clearly and satisfactorily belongs where it is, or better expresses the beauty and stability of an ordered life, than its old country homes, with their pillared porches, their simplicity of design, their sheltered groves, their walks bordered with boxwood shrubs ([1930] 1976, p.55).

Although Davidson’s statement is partly correct, his view in general is way too positive. He simply ignores the fact that Southern architecture with its plantations, mansions, and cabins was instrumental in managing the economic system of the slave system. And he also fails to mention that Southern architecture has set severe limitations upon the living conditions of the black population. In the Old South, the black people’s cabins were often not better than the stables for the livestock. Their cabins might have been called shelters but they were not real houses at all. Moreover, black people were even denied to decorate the walls of their cabins with traditional African ornaments, as will be shown in the following.

Mansions, on the other hand, clearly expressed the wealth of the plantation owner gained by the exploitation of slave work force. Their mansions, usually located some distance away from the slave quarters, symbolized a power structure that was instrumental in inscribing unjust social principles. This chapter provides a brief survey of selected architectural styles that shaped Southern buildings in the past. To begin with, Poesch summarizes the variety of diverse Southern architectural styles in her entry "Architecture" published in the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*:

> These include the rather sober early Georgian, the more exuberant high Georgian, the neoclassical of the Federal period, the 'columnar' style where late Georgian and Greek Revival sometimes blend, the austere 'pure' Greek revival, the Gothic, the Italianate of the post-Civil War period, the various picturesque tastes of the late 19th century, and the beaux arts formalism of the early 20th century. Also included now as older and historic are such relatively recent modes as the art deco and modern of the 1920s and 1930s (1989, p.55).

For Poesch, the style of a certain time is not only important for the functions a building serves, but also to demonstrate the shared tastes of an era:

> They [the buildings erected in the modish style of a given era] are important symbols or visual statements of what both the owner and the designer or architect conceive to be the role of the building in that time and place. They reflect in turn the status and role of those who live in or use the building. Furthermore, the buildings reflect not only the status of the occupants or users of the building but also the aspirations and achievements of the entire community (1989, p.55).

Although most architectural styles were commonly used throughout the whole of the United States, Southern architecture added some regional accents. For instance, the long, hot summers in the South forced the architects to invent ways to cope with heat – which led to the creation of "dogtrots, wide central halls, porches, verandas, piazzas, galleries, cupolas on large houses, attic vents, raised cottages with an air circulation underneath, and T-shaped house plans, to name a few" (Poesch 1989, p.55). Although porches and the like represent an American tradition, they are in fact not an American invention. According to Edwards, the front porch has its origin most probably in African architecture (1989, p.23).

The table below presents a timeline of some major architectural styles used in the Old South before the Civil War. The dates listed in this table are taken from Mendelowitz's book *A History of American Art* (1970) and may vary from other sources dealing with the same subject – for the simple fact that there are no clear cut boundaries when a specific architectural style in a particular region within the federal states of the New World has begun or ended (pp.69, 129, 131, 146, 255):

| **Period** | **Architectural Styles** |
|---|---|
| 1700 – 1776 | Colonial Georgian |
| 1785 – 1810 | Federal Style, also referred to as Roman Style |
| 1810 – 1830 | Greek Revival |
| 1830 – 1865 | Gothic Revival, Romantic Revival |

Eaton highlights some architectural features typical of the Colonial Georgian style in his book, *A History of the Old South. The Emergence of a Reluctant Nation*:

> […] Georgian houses were symmetrical, usually rectangular in shape, and more commodious. On the exterior the Georgian house was adorned with classic doorways, large symmetrical sash instead of casement windows, dormer windows, cornices, balustrades on the roofs, pilasters, and so on. […] The Southern buildings were built for coolness, containing a large central hallway, high ceilings, chimneys on the end walls, and detached kitchens. The interiors of the Georgian homes were characterized by elegant simplicity, expressed in the white paneling, classic mantels, and beautiful stairways. Although this architecture of the Georgian period was an imitation of the current English style and had little originality, it nevertheless produced beautiful and dignified homes, an ideal setting for the well-poised aristocrats of the eighteenth century ([1949] 1975, p.71).

Unfortunately, Colonial Georgian did not only reflect the thirteen colonies' relationships with England but also their dependency upon the mother country. After the Revolutionary War ended America's colonial status, Colonial Georgian ceased to be the dominant architectural style and then architecture shifted to a greater formality and to a reverence for classic styles as, for instance, Roman, Greek, and Gothic Revival. For Americans, Greek Revival style was particularly attractive because it enabled them to combine their fascination with ancient cultures with contemporary needs.

As Mendelowitz points out:

> In the early years of the classic revival, neoclassicism (the new classicism), as the movement is also called, was oriented toward Rome, rather than Greece, although the enthusiasm for all things antiquity was greatly quickened. This more Roman-oriented phase occurred in America between 1785 and 1810, the years during which the Federal government and its institutions became established, and therefore the style of this period is often termed the 'Federal Style'. After 1810 ancient Greece became the focal point of intellectual and artistic inspiration; thus this later phase of Romantic classicism has been called the Greek Revival (1970, p.129).

Hines explains the distinctions between Greek and Roman architecture as follows: "While the general image of Roman building suggested urban juxtapositions, annexations, and collisions of forms, as in the Roman Forum, the chief image of Greek architecture was of serenely discrete structures, related to but interstitially separated from each other, as on the Acropolis in Athens" (1996, p.46). In her article "Looking at History through Architecture", Gaffney Ansel describes some important features belonging to a typical Greek Revival building:

> [A typical Greek Revival house] consisted of a two-story temple façade (front) with a triangular pedimented gable. Hollow wood columns were free standing or applied to the façade. White wood frame houses of the style are seen everywhere. Regional materials such as ashlar (square cut) granite, sandstone or marble were used to create smooth surfaces then trimmed with wood Greek motif ornaments. Cast iron decorated porches and stair railings.
>
> Windows were treated with bold lintels or heavy molding. They were typically six over six as in the Federal period. Doors were flanked by sidelights trimmed with wood ornaments of leaf-like or geometrical design. The entrance was temple-like, grand and impressive.
>
> Throughout history columns have held a specific significance. Originally they were reserved for temples and symbolized godliness. Columns give a building an appearance of great importance, they signify power. The Greek Revival style became popular here as an expression of the democratic principle of equality. Columns were no longer reserved for the wealthy or for important public buildings. Many small homes were built with columnar entrances. How proud these people must have felt passing through their majestic, temple-like doorways! (Gaffney Ansel 2005).

Mendelowitz makes clear that Greek Revival permeated all portions of the United States – but particularly the Old South:

> […] After the turn of the century Greek ideals came to the fore, first in the work of Latrobe, then in Washington, and gradually spreading through the central states into New York, New England, and the South. By the third decade of the century, the Greek Revival was at its height; its influence permeated the newly developing areas west of the Allegheny Mountains, and it flourished in the prosperous lower Mississippi Valley. In the most derivative manifestations of the Greek Revival, the Greek temple provided the pattern for architectural propriety, particularly the Doric or Ionic temple with a pedimented portico. On the other hand, much of the building of this period was so far from a servile imitation of ancient Greek architecture that even some of its most serious students question the validity of the term 'Greek Revival'. […] What might be described as the Greek spirit frequently prevailed through simple, functional plans, a straightforward use of fine materials, integrity of structure, and bits of elegant classic detail, all monumentally composed.
>
> […] The landed gentry of the South continued to live in a lordly manner in the years after the Revolution and built accordingly, so that handsome examples of the classic revival also appeared there. […] The Greek Revival reached the peak of its popularity in the northern and central states in the 1830s, after which time it was gradually replaced by an enthusiasm for the Gothic style, but it remained dominant in the South until the Civil War. Then, with the collapse of the Southern economy, the great plantation mansions were neglected and gradually fell into disrepair and ruin. In the first decades after the Civil War there was little building activity in the South, and by the time it was resumed, the Greek Revival was dead. Today, the great porticos and pediments of these old mansions constitute some of America's most romantic remains as they stand desolate amidst a litter of crumbling plaster and broken laths (1970, pp. 130, 131, 145, 146)

For philosophically inclined Southerners, as Hines contends, "the appeal of Greek architecture was more than that of just a new aesthetic fashion. The predominantly rural social structure of the American South, the penchant for placing important buildings in relatively serene isolation, helped to contributed to the region's affinity for things Greek" (1996, p.46). Yet Hines view is too positive for he fails to mention that ancient Greece, which provided a model for the American South, was also built on a slave system. Seen this way, Southern houses in the Greek Revival style were also an emblem of a society that favors slave holding.

After the Civil War, however, the "Greek Revival plantation home was not a way of life, even for a few Americans, in the society that now had to emerge" (Burchard and Bush-Brown 1961, p. 52). In addition, Mendelowitz asserts: "the use of a Greek temple as a façade to ennoble a building, to achieve grandeur by association, as it were, was essentially a sentimental and romantic concept" (1970, p.148). In the light of this, a new style of architecture emerged that was different from the glorification and pathos of the Greek Revival design: Gothic Revival.

Gothic Revival soon took the place of Greek Revival as the dominating architectural design in the American South three decades before the Civil War. As Gaffney Ansel notes, "the Pre-Civil-War years saw life in America become more complex with more people, epidemics, scarcity of jobs and crime. […] Building styles began to reflect the emphasis on freedom of choice, individuality, and importance of home and family" (2005). The period from 1840-1860, also referred to as Early Victorian, thus saw the development of "bold designs with irregular forms, harmony in building and surrounding grounds" (Gaffney Ansel 2005). Mendelowitz describes this architectural style as follows:

> The architectural vocabulary of the Gothic Revival differed sharply from that of classicism. The symmetry so essential to the classic style gave way to a taste or irregularity; formality was replaced by informality; restraint in the use of decoration yielded in exuberance. The horizontal moldings and low rooflines essential for creating an air of classic calm were supplanted by a vertical emphasis. Round arches, domes, barrel vaults, and classic columns and pilasters gave way to pointed arches, clustered columns, ribbed vaulting, and buttresses. The entire repertory of medieval architecture forms was used to satisfy the growing desire for a mood of romantic sentiment. Charming spires, towers, turrets, and pinnacles helped to create an uneven, aspiring skyline; […]. In churches, particularly, and to a lesser degree in homes, libraries, and public buildings, the high narrow rooms, the tall windows with their traceries and stained glass, and the buttresses and spires all contributed to a mood of religious exaltation, of the self immersed in a greater whole, of communion with an infinite good […]. Americans quickly observed that the picturesque irregularity of the medieval styles, of towers, turrets, and pinnacles, irregular stone surfaces, and wood painted in dull colors fitted unobtrusively into the landscape, where the flickering light and shadows of foliage, falling on the broken surfaces, created a harmonious intermingling of the man-made and the natural (1970, pp.148, 149).

For Snadon, "both Greek and Gothic in the South were aspects of a larger quest for an architectural identity. It was a quest not merely to house Southern people and institutions but to achieve for Southern civilization a parity with the great civilizations of the past, whether classical or medieval" (1989, p.76).

Another architectural design emerging in the antebellum years is the Italian Villa style. As Gaffney Ansel asserts, typical of this style is that "window size and placement were varied and chimneys were grouped. Roofs were lower, openings arch shaped, [and] windows were two over two. Double doors were surrounded by rough-cut masonry. The arch and smooth surfaces are major characteristics of the Italian Villa and its relative, the Tuscan style" (2005).

In the postbellum years, [in terms of architectural styles also called Late Victorian], by contrast, when there was "a poverty-stricken aura of defeatism, inaction, and decay" (Hines 1996, p.88), the new society emerging from the aftermath of the war developed new architectural modes: the neoclassical and the neo-Gothic [also referred to as Victorian Gothic]. In chapter eight of his book *William Faulkner and the Tangible Past*, entitled "Spacious, Suave, Sonorous, and Monastic: The Modernist Architecture of Yoknapatawpha", Hines offers an explanation of these new styles:

> The fashionable 'new' architecture of the postwar period was a much encumbered extension of the two major antebellum styles – the neo-classic and the neo-Gothic. The expression of the former, developed largely in France, was a highly strung revival of the seventeenth-century French Baroque, with its mansard roofs and rounded, oval, and curving forms, a revival that was patronized by Emperor Napoleon III and his architect, Baron Georges Haussmann. In the 1860s, 1870s, 1880s, much of Paris was rebuilt in this style atop a newly reopened city of grand diagonal avenues that were superimposed upon what remained of the meandering medieval streetscape. Because of the 'imperial' patronage, the style was called 'Second Empire' or, more informally, 'Mansardic'. […]
>
> The other side of the postbellum architectural coin was the High Victorian Gothic, made especially popular in the mid-century English architecture of William Butterfield. As opposed to the monochromatic, rounded, mansardic flourishes of the Second Empire, the High Victorian emphasized pointed, spiky, polychromatic, attenuated versions of Downing and Upjohn's relatively gentle antebellum Gothic Revival (Hines 1996, pp. 88, 89).

As Gaffney Ansel writes, the Late Victorian is often regarded as a period of time when people expressed the most freedom in the design of buildings. Americans had finally abandoned the social structure of England and were about to enter a new era and a new type of class division: blue-collar worker versus white-collar worker. As this author explains: “The new social structure was a result of modern industry, worker vs. owner. During this transition people experimented with sort of an ‘anything goes’ attitude. Many styles prevailed” (2005).

Following Late Victorian, the advent of steel construction and the skyscraper architecture of the “Chicago School” introduced the modernist period of architecture. In this respect, Hines asserts that Frank Lloyd Wright and his so-called “Prairie School” have “transferred the structural and aesthetic principles of skyscraper design to the private residence and the smaller public building and conveyed [thus] the ‘Chicago’ principles of elegantly simply, functional modernism to the world” of the early 20th century (Hines 1996, pp. 103, 105).

After WWII, especially with the advent of air-conditioning, the built environment of the South conformed to rather national pattern of architecture. Today, most of the houses in the United States were probably built after the beginnings of WWI. Moreover, a large number of public houses, office towers, and industrial structures were also built after that date (Poesch 1989, p.55).

Another distinctive feature of Southern architecture is the concept of the cabin. Unlike houses in the various architectural styles described above, the image of the cabin is representative of those who live at the very bottom of the social hierarchy as, for example, poor whites and black slaves. Usually, the cabin is a simple one-storied dwelling built of logs. Yet in the American South, however, there existed a vast variety of different cabin types as, for instance, the pen, the saddleback house, the dogtrot-cabin, or the shotgun house. In his study of vernacular architecture in the context of Faulkner’s South, Hines highlights the differences, developments, and origins of some significant Southern cabin types:

> Originally such buildings were of logs, notched at the corners, a technique similar to that used in various Native American structures. […] There was a great difference between the early, one-room ‘log-cabin’, an Irish term, and the more permanent and technically and socially substantial ‘log house’. Spatially, the basic form of the

> Southern folk house was the so-called single pen, a rectilinear, one-room log structure whose short side averaged some seventeen feet as compared with the long side of approximately twenty feet. It had a gable roof with a single chimney centered along one of the gable ends. Front and back doors were usually centered opposite each other in the long sides.
>
> When it became necessary to enlarge such houses, the usual method was to add a similar structure to one of the gable ends. If the addition occurred at the end opposite the chimney, the structure, now composed of two single pens, was logically called a 'double pen house', with separate front entrances into the two rooms and a second end chimney in the center of the new gable. If the addition to the single pen was made to the chimney end, the resulting 'saddleback house' had a central chimney that served both rooms, while usually retaining the double pen practice of separate entrances from the porch. Since there were obvious difficulties in adding notch-cornered log structures, the simplest solution frequently was to connect two single pens by an open passageway, with the passageway and both houses covered by one continuous roof, forming the popular 'dogtrot' houses.
>
> In addition to the technical rationale for constructing them that way, the open passageway of the dogtrot house was a pleasant place for sitting and socializing, and the type became a ubiquitous building form, not only in the countryside but, in its formative years, of the Southern town as well (Hines 1996, pp. 24, 25).

Foy asserts that the saddleback house, also referred to as saddlebag house, did not appear frequently in the South until the 19th century, and its "use there extended from Kentucky to North Carolina to the eastern Gulf Coast region" (1989, p.519). Unlike the saddleback house, the dogtrot cabin was spread over the regions "from the Appalachians to the edge of the Great Plains and from just north of the Ohio to near the Gulf shores during the brief span from 1775 to 1835. In this diffusion, the dogtrot was one of the steady hallmarks of the Upland (as opposed to the Lowland or Tidewater) South" (Newton 1989, p.499). As a distinctive feature, the dogtrot cabin has an open passageway whereas the saddleback house has a central chimney in that location. The dogtrot house is also referred to as a "dogrun" or "possumtrot". Lytle's study of Southern architecture illustrates the way people have lived in dogtrot cabins:

> The house is a dog-run with an ell running to the rear, the kitchen and dining-room being the ell, if the family does not eat in the kitchen; and the sleeping rooms in the main part of the house. The dog-run is a

> two- or four-crib construction with an open space between, the whole covered by one roof. The run or trot gets its name from the hounds passing through from the front to the rear. It may or may not have a floor, according to the taste or pride of the occupant. […] The hall is almost bare, but scrubbed clean. At the back is a small stairway leading to the half story. This is where the boys sleep, in their bachelorhood definitely removed from the girls. The farmer and his wife sleep there in a four-poster […] the youngest chillurn sleep on pallets made up on the floor (1966, pp.217, 218).

In their book entitled *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, the photographer Walker Evans and the author James Agee give an account of Southern dogtrot houses through Evan's photographs and with Agee's words.

Another typical Southern building type is the shotgun house. Newton explains that the dogtrot is usually "one room wide and three rooms long, under a gable roof, with eaves to the side". In addition, he asserts that the shotgun house mostly occurred in lower social contexts, such as plantation quarters or company housing. According to Newton, the shotgun "has generally been a house for dependent people and [was] not privately owned". In addition to that, the author stresses that the most striking feature of the shotgun is its roof: "Whereas the other Southern folk and vernacular houses had their gables to the sides, the shotgun had them to the front and the rear" (1989, p.519).

As slave quarters, however, plantation owners used any kind of cabin types. Sometimes, black slaves tried to integrate features of African folk architecture into the construction of their slave quarters, but by the nineteenth century the plantation owners considered these reminders of the slaves' past as a potentially dangerous act (Wright 1981, p.46). As the same critic likewise points out:

> In the antebellum decades, few Afro-American quarters suggested evidence of such distinctly African imprint. There was almost no ornamentation, even though West African dwellings would have been decorated with paint, carving, shards, and carefully arranged thatch roofs. The starkness of the cabin was not simply a matter of insufficient time or inadequate tools. […] The fact that the houses do not display […] [a] sense of exuberant artistry suggests the owner's strong disinclination to allow houses to be part of black culture, […] (Wright 1981, p.46).

The plantation owner's refusal to let their slaves integrate elements reminiscent of black culture into the structures of their cabins makes clear that architecture was an important means to control the slaves. Whereas blacks were denied the use of traditional architectural features, the plantation owners, by contrast, borrowed an important element from African architecture: porches. Since cabins offered only very limited space inside, many activities had to take place outside. As a result, the porch became a place for "dancing, singing, storytelling, and religious meetings" (Wright 1981, p.51). Sensing thus the various uses of porches, early American settlers soon attached porches to their own dwellings. This is how the porch found access to the architecture of the United States [see also chapter 6.3.4]. Although most cabins were rather tiny, they were inhabited by a number of people. As Wright asserts in chapter three of her book on housing in America:

> Even in their crowded, Spartan cabins, blacks maintained a sense of family bonds, community ties, and privacy. A slave household often contained eight or ten people, children and adults of all ages living together in a single room or a room and an upstairs loft. The group generally included extended family relations, as well as the nuclear family. There were relatively few old people, for the life expectancy of slaves was much lower than that of the white population. The cabin itself offered little more than cramped sleeping space. Most slaves slept on blankets or straw mats on the floor, or on narrow wood pallets softened with moss. Yet these single-room dwellings functioned as complex spaces for family living, eating, cooking, entertaining, and intimacy (1981, pp.49, 50).

In general, the slave quarters were set off at some distance from a plantation house. The cabins were usually "downwind from the big house so that smells could be avoided, and behind the [big] house, so that the planter's family had a pleasant vista" (Wright 1981, p.43). In an interview with Bailey Cunningham published in *Weevils in the Wheat: Interview with Virginia Ex-Slaves,* a former slave gives an account of his quarter on a Virginia plantation:

> 'They were log cabins. Some had one room and some had two rooms, and board floors. Our master was a rich man. He had a store and a sawmill. The cabins were covered with boards, nailed on, and had stick-and-mud chimneys […]. The cabins were built in two rows not very far away from the misses big house' (Cunningham 1980, p.82).

In her book *Building the Dream. A Social History of Housing in America*, Wright offers a detailed description of an actual slave quarter that shows the bad living conditions of those who had to live there:

> Most slave houses, built of hewn logs and daubed with the red clay or mud of the region, looked fittingly primitive to whites. A few houses were constructed of rough brick or rammed earth (a technique known as pisé, which derived from Africa). Descriptions and excavations suggest that many interiors were plastered and whitewashed, sometimes as a yearly sanitary measure. But other accounts, such as that of the former slave Louis Hughes, say that 'no attempt was made to give them [the quarters] a neat appearance'. Chimneys were of crude brick or, in less substantial cabins, a combination of sticks and clay. […] In general, ventilation was extremely poor. Cold air circulated freely through the chinks in the wall, while smoke from the fireplace blackened everything inside. As John Brown complained: 'The wind and rain will come in and the smoke will not go out.' If there was a window – and many cabins had none – it was small and seldom had a pane. In some instances, the doorway provided the only fresh air. This raised a conflict for the inhabitants, who had to choose between letting in a breeze and protecting themselves from snakes, animals, and intruders. The unpleasant, often unseemly aspects of slave housing corresponds to the prevailing white attitudes about blacks, and especially their opinion of black domestic life for slaves (Wright 1981, pp. 46, 47).

Another realistic description of a slave's cabin is offered in Du Bois's book *The Souls of Black Folk*, as the following account of a sharecropper's cabin shows:

> It is nearly always old and bare, built of rough boards and neither plastered or ceiled. Light and ventilation are supplied by the single door and by the square hole in the wall with its wooden shutter. There is no glass, porch, or ornamentation without. Within is a fireplace, black and smoky, and usually unsteady with age. A bed or two, a table, a wooden chest, and a few chairs compose the furniture; while a stray show-bill or newspaper makes up the decorations for the walls. Now and then one may find such a cabin kept scrupulously neat, with merry steaming fireplace and hospitable door; but the majority are dirty and dilapidated, smelling of eating and sleeping, poorly ventilated, and anything but homes ([1903] 1996, p.114).

As can be seen in both Wright and Du Bois' accounts, cabins are no homes at all. They were just crude and dirty shelters for those at the very bottom of the society.

To link this discussion of some major architectural styles and features used in the USA and particularly in the Old South, the table below provides a brief survey of some architectural styles employed in Faulkner's imaginary world:

| Architectural Styles: | Used in the context of Yoknapatawpha County |
|---|---|
| Colonial Georgian | - Grenier's plantation (Old Frenchmen place) |
| Greek Revival | - Jefferson's Courthouse (RFN)<br>- Miss Habersham's house (GDM, INT)<br>- Cassius de Spain's mansion ("Barn Burning")<br>- Sartoris mansion (FID, UNV)<br>- Sutpen's Hundred (AA, RFN)<br>- Compson mansion (SF, AA) |
| Neo-Gothic | - Episcopal Church in Jefferson (SF)<br>- The Grierson house ("A Rose for Emily")<br>- Jefferson's jail (RFN, INT) |
| Modernist Architecture | - Flem Snopes' renovated mansion (MAN)<br>- Feinman Airport (PYL)<br>- Eula Acres (modern suburb) (MAN)<br>- Flem's bungalow ("Centaur in Brass")<br>- Ira Ewing's villa ("Golden Land")<br>- Fairfield and Halcyon Acres (postmodern suburbs) RFN |
| Eclecticism of various Southern Styles | - Benbow estate (SAN) |

Southern architectural styles and features are especially relevant in Faulkner's rendering of upper class houses in Yoknapatawpha. In Faulkner's writings, Greek Revival houses do not only reflect the Old South's veneration for an ancient slave holding society, but they are also the perfect embodiment of the patriarchal order of the Old South. Thus, they represent a white tradition in which architecture clearly imposes limitations upon the different races and sexes.

Cabins, by contrast, are dwellings for members of the black community and for those of Yoknapatawpha's lowest social stratum: poor white sharecroppers.

Modernist architecture, on the other hand, mirrors Faulkner's loathing of those small homes that quickly emerged after WWII. This finds expression in his rendering of "standardized Veterans' Housing Matchboxes" (MAN, p.974), which make Jefferson appear like a replica of the sterile and monotonous suburbs of the Northern states [see Eula Acres in *The Mansion* (p.974), for example].

In his public speeches and lectures, Faulkner sometimes uses architectural metaphors to convey the ideas behind his work. As Chandler notes in this context, "Faulkner frequently speaks of his writing as carpentry, of the business of crafting sentences as one no less exacting than the hewing and honing and joining that enables a structure to stand free and bear weight" (1991, pp.2, 3).

This becomes particularly apparent in *Faulkner in the University*, where Faulkner uses architectural metaphors or carpentry imagery as a means to describe the craft of writing time and again:

> No, it was not my intention to write a pageant of a county, I simply was using the quickest tool to hand, I was using what I knew best, which was the locale where I was and had lived most of my life. That was just like the carpenter building the fence – he uses the nearest hammer (FIU, p.3).
>
> I would say, if he [a writer] is creating characters which are flesh-and-blood people, are believable, and are honest and true, then he can use sensationalism if he thinks that's an effective way to tell his story. […] That is, sensationalism is in a way an incidental tool, that he might use sensationalism as the carpenter picks up another hammer to drive a nail. But he doesn't – the carpenter don't build a house just to drive nails. He drives nails to build a house (FIU, pp.49, 50).
>
> I would say that the writer has three sources, imagination, observation, and experience. He himself doesn't know how much of which he uses at any given moment because each of the sources themselves are not too important to him. That he is writing about people, and he uses his material from the three sources as the carpenter reaches into his lumber room and finds a board that fits the particular corner he is building (FIU, p.103).
>
> I'm not ashamed of it [*Mosquitoes*], because that was the chips, the badly sawn planks that the carpenter produces while he's learning to be a first-rate carpenter […] (FIU, p.257).

Equating the art of writing with the craft of carpentry, Faulkner once again tries to convey the image of himself as a simple farmer who chanced to have written a few notable pieces of writing. For Reed, Faulkner's responses appear too artificial, pretending to be either a "gentlemen dirt-farmer and guts writer" or he plays the "academics' game" and answers the questions with a "paradox or deeper meaning which has just occurred to him" (1973, p.3). Whatever may be true about it, one thing is absolutely clear: architecture was and has always been of great significance for Faulkner.

Other works consulted on Southern architecture are Poesch's book *The Art of the Old South: Painting, Sculpture, Architecture and the Products of Craftsmen* (1983), Hamlin's *Greek Revival Architecture in America* (1944), and Mumford's *The South in Architecture* (1941). Andrews' *Pride of the South: A Social History of Southern Architecture* (1979) comes up with fascinating photographs but it fails to offer a real social history. Walker's *American Shelter. An Illustrated Encyclopedia of the American Home* (1997) presents ninety-five different American architectural styles. A bibliography of architectural history in the USA is presented in Condit's article "Architectural History in the United States: A Bibliographic Essay" in American Studies International, Vol. 16.1, 1977. Kerr's guide *Old Homes of Mississippi, Vol.1: Natchez and the South* ([1977] 1989) includes all necessary information about architectural attractions of Southern Mississippi. This book contains several photographs and descriptions of hundreds of Southern buildings.

For further information about cabins and influences on them derived from traditional African architecture consult Vlach's books *By the Work of their Hands: Studies in Afro-American Folklife* (1991) and *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* (1993). The latter book is good a vantage point to analyze the structures and spaces that formed the former slaves' environment. Carl Anthony's text "The Big House and the Slave Quarters" and Charles H. Fairbank's article "The Kingsley Slave Cabins in Duval County, Florida, 1968" also provide good insights into this issue. For architecture in West Africa see Susan Denyer's study *African Traditional Architecture* (1978).

Holdt's book *Bilder aus Amerika* (1978) is a photographic journey through black America. It contains photographs of some shacks still inhabited by black people. Holdt's pictures reflect the terrible living conditions of blacks in the USA.

Edward Pessen's book *The Log Cabin Myth. The Social Backgrounds of the Presidents* (1978) offers an interesting insight into the popular American belief that presidents are ordinary men of humble surroundings who have taken on an extraordinary job.

# 4. Yoknapatawpha as a House Society

Sixteen chapters of this dissertation focus on different aspects of the house motif in Faulkner's writings. In the following chapters, the reader is not only confronted with various uses of the house motif in Faulkner, but also with the symbolic meaning of doors, windows, porches, attics, and fences in the Southerner's writings. In view of the fact that every kind of categorization serves to make complex issues easier to understand, the reader nevertheless has to be aware of the interdependence that exists between these sixteen chapters. For this reason, this chapter illustrates in which way all the different chapters of this dissertation are linked and related to each other.

The aim and object of the subsequent chapters is thus not merely to trace the recurrent nature of some architectural elements in Faulkner; first and foremost, every single chapter highlights in a particular way how Faulkner uses houses and house related imagery as a very complex and elaborate symbol system to make architectural features become architectural metaphors for his stories.

Faulkner's *imago mundi* is a "house-haunted landscape" comprising houses of various types (Polk 1998, p.25). Basically, one can divide Faulkner's fictitious houses into two distinct categories: private and public houses. The latter group includes such diverse edifices as jail and courthouse [law and order], barbershops [service and gossip], stores [goods and entertainment], banks [finances], churches [worship], and brothels [male amusement]. Taken together, public houses are places where Faulkner's characters can commingle – they are therefore loci for interaction and communal activities. Moreover, the jail and the courthouse are important edifices representing the political power structure of the town Jefferson.

Private houses, on the other hand, are places for individuals and families. In Faulkner, private houses are presented as stately mansions, as middle class town houses, or as weathered and dilapidated cabins set somewhere in the outskirts of Jefferson, inhabited by blacks or 'white trash' characters. Private houses are the only places where legitimate relationships can flourish between the sexes. Unlike public houses, private houses are frequently used to show the deterioration of the once finest families, or to display conflicts caused by the advent of a new order.

Every single house, regardless of its type or magnificence, can be described in terms of three dimensions. Therefore, one can distinguish between the vertical [height], horizontal [length], and lateral [width] dimension of a house. As Bachelard notes: "A house is imagined as a vertical being. It rises upward. It differentiates itself in terms of verticality. […] Verticality is ensured by the polarity of cellar and attic" (1994, p. 17).

Yet Faulkner does not only stress the vertical dimension of houses; his mansions, for instance, do emphasize all these three dimensions simultaneously to underline thus the higher social standing of its owner.

The cabins, by contrast, are virtually dimensionless edifices inhabited by lower class characters. As will be seen, Faulkner repeatedly contrasts the opposed principles mansion [symbol of wealth and power] and cabin [symbol of poverty and powerlessness]. Town houses, however, occupy a middle ground in his fiction. They frequently serve as a locus for conflicts and tensions within families.

Furthermore, it is also important to distinguish between the inner and outer spaces of a house. For Bachelard, "outside and inside form a dialectic of division […] [which] has the sharpness of the dialectic of *yes* and *no*. […] Philosophers, when confronted with outside and inside, think in terms of being and non-being (1994, pp.211, 212). Seen this way, it becomes clear that is not only important to see what happens *inside* a house, but also what is going on *outside* of it.

The inside of a house offers intimate spaces where an individual is able to find a refuge from the chaos and disorder of the modern world outside. But, on the other hand, the inside of a house can also be a prison from which many a Faulkner character cannot get away. As will be demonstrated, particularly adolescent children and adult and young female characters suffer from being contained in their houses. These characters experience social exclusion because of their sex, social status, or due to overbearing and overprotecting parents, for instance.

In contrast to interior spaces, however, outside spaces do expose an individual to an observant community and to ever changing climatic conditions [heat and cold, rain and sun]. Seen this way, outside places represent virtually everything from which the individual seeks temporary escape when entering the inside of a house.

Significant features belonging to the outside of a house are gardens, drives, fences, gates and, of course, architectural structures such as porches, galleries, or porticoes and the like. Usually, fences surround houses in order to keep intruders out. Therefore, fences separate private property from neighboring public or private places such as houses, properties, paths or roads. Roads, conversely, are a means to escape from a house and all that it represents [Elly, Lena Grove, Caddy, Miss Quentin Compson, and McLendon]. On a metaphorical plane, then, roads are important means of liberating oneself from normative demands.

Porches, on the other hand, offer the "place […] that joins two different worlds, the world of the road and the world of the house" (Skei 2004, p. 164). Usually attached to the front or back of a house, porches are places to sit outdoors. Significantly, porches are liminal places where individuals are expected to behave differently than inside a house. In Faulkner's writings, they are frequently the locus of social gathering, storytelling, and gossip. Sometimes, Faulkner contrasts porches [a place under control] with gardens [an uncontrollable place, symbolic of individual freedom]. Like porches [and especially porticoes], gardens also attach significance to the horizontal and lateral dimensions of a stately house.

The inner spaces of a house clearly depend upon its size and magnitude. Whereas cabins in Faulkner are usually rendered as one-storied edifices, mansions and town houses do mostly comprise two stories and an attic – but not a basement. It strikes me that Faulkner's downstairs rooms are recurrently inhabited by gray-haired women who have never been taken as a wife [Miss Emily and Miss Rosa] or who were deserted by a husband [Mrs. Boyd], while the upper regions of a Faulkner house, by contrast, appear to be places for trapped male characters [**H**omer **B**arron and **H**oward **B**oyd]. In addition to that, the second floor is often a place for generational or parental conflicts [see, for example, the conflicts between Elly and Ailanthia, respectively between Aunt Jenny and Miss Narcissa].

Situated at the top of a house, attics are places for isolated and estranged characters [mostly male], who are also in conflict with their environment [Wilfred Midgleston (the poet in "Black Music" and "Carcassonne"), Goodhue Coldfield, Hule and his unnamed sister in "Mountain Victory"]. Moreover, attics are also places to store things since Faulkner's houses are never equipped with basements.

Windows and doors as used in Faulkner's writings are architectural features of utmost importance. They do not only connect the inner world of a house with the outside, they also separate them. In this respect, windows, doors, and fences are metaphorical structures to indicate social exclusion. This becomes especially apparent in the way Faulkner uses windows and doors [which principally serve to connect the inside of a house with its outside] as boundaries that keep characters away from their social environment. In the first section of *The Sound and the Fury*, by contrast, Faulkner uses fences as a leitmotif to render Benjy Compson's exclusion from both his family and society.

As the complexity and richness of this subject matter already indicates, the house in Faulkner is used for a variety of different purposes. Thus, there has to be more than just one critical approach to comprehend the various uses of houses in the Yoknapatawpha context. As a consequence, this dissertation has to analyze the house motif in Faulkner's writings from shifting critical perspectives.

To begin with, one approach to comprehend the nature of the house in Faulkner is to analyze it from a psychoanalytical perspective. Freud's essay *Das Unheimliche*. *Aufsätze zur Literatur* (1963) [explaining the nature of the uncanny] and his writings about the significance of the house in dreams [Freud asserts that in dreams "the one typical – that is regular – representation of the human figure as a whole is a house" (1971, p.157)] are important texts to understand the meaning of house imagery in a Gothic context. In addition, Freud also points out that rooms represent the female body while 'orifices' as, for example, doors symbolize female genitalia (1971, p.159). These facts are of relevance in the discussion of Faulkner's use of door imagery [see chapter 6.3.3]. Polk's essay *Children of the Dark House* is clearly based on Freud's writings.

The French philosopher Bachelard offers a phenomenological approach to let the reader understand the "intimate values of inside spaces" ([1969] 1994, p.3). Bollnow, on the other hand, highlights the significance of the house in our life and its place in society from the angle of a sociological perspective ([1963] 2004).

From a Marxist point of view, the house and its contents can be seen as a place of class struggle. Since the essence of Marxist criticism is to deal with material living conditions, this critical concept is useful in analyzing the image of

the house as a symbol of social stratification, social climbing, and class struggle in Faulkner's fictional world. For further information consult Williams' *Marxism and Literature* (1977), Lukács' *The Historical Novel* (1974), or Richard Godden on Faulkner (1997).

Feminist criticism, by contrast, is concerned both with the representation of women in literature and with women's changing role in society by freeing them from oppressive restraints imposed on them by the male sex. In a feminist context, then, the house is also symbolic of male superiority and female subservience. Since the house in Western culture is representative of a patriarchal order, house imagery in literature is useful to show how the world is organized by principles defined by men and to the advantage of men. For a further reading see Gilbert and Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) and Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1969) or the many feminist critics on Faulkner.

Another critical approach to fathom the significance of the house in the context of Faulkner's writings is based on anthropological studies. In this respect, Lévi-Strauss' concept of the house society (*société a maison*) is a perfect frame to understand how Faulkner has organized the social structure of Yoknapatawpha County. Claude Lévi-Strauss, originally associated with the study of kinship systems, presents in his concept of a house-based society how the house itself can become a system for structuring and organizing a society. In his book *The Way of the Masks* (1983), Lévi-Strauss defines the concept of a société a maison [house based society] as follows: "[the house is] a corporate body holding an estate made up of both material and immaterial wealth which perpetuates itself through the transmission of its name, […], down a real or imaginary line, considered legitimate as long as this continuity can express itself in the language of kinship or affinity, and, most often, of both" (1987, p.174). In "Maison", a brief article published in *Dictionnaire de l'ethnologie et de l'anthropologie* (1991), Lévi-Strauss characterizes his idea of the house and a house based society thus:

> Par rapport au clan ou au lignage, la maison possède donc des caractères distinctifs qu'on peut énumérer comme suit. La maison est 1) une personne morale, 2) detentrice d'un domaine 3) composé à la fois de biens máteriels et immatériels, et qui 4) se perpétue par la transmission de son nom, de sa fortune et de ses titres en ligne réelle

> ou fictive, 5) tenue pour légitime à la condition que cette continuité puisse se traduire dans le language de la parenté ou de l'alliance, ou 6) le plus souvent les deux ensembles.
> Il en résulte que, dans les sociétés «!à maison!», la continuité du lignage, jamais oubliée, se compose avec un autre principe: celui de l'alliance temporaire ou prolongée entre deux ou plusieurs lignages pour engendrer des unités sociales d'un nouveau type, où la façon dont les lignées s'entrecroisent et se nouent compte autant sinon plus que leur continuité (1991, p.170).

As Howell points out, Lévi-Strauss suggests that the house can be understood as a "moral person" [«!une personne morale!»] that can be defined "in terms similar to those used to define a noble House in the Middle Ages in Europe" (1995, p. 149). In this context, González-Ruibal explains: "Feudal European families, with their focus on the castle or manor (material wealth), their emphasis on the acquisition and maintenance of names and titles (immaterial wealth), the use of different kinship strategies to enlarge the house, hereditary prerogatives, etc, exemplify, […], how a house society works" (2006, p.145).

According to her reading of Lévi-Strauss' definition of a 'société a maison', Waterson contends that this definition includes three key principles to describe the house as a social phenomenon: "[…] (i) the ideal of community; (ii) the passing down of some form of valued property […]; and (iii) the strategic exploitation of the 'language of kinship or affinity' (which includes extensive uses of fictive relations when necessary to prevent the extinction of a 'house)" (1995, pp.49, 50). Moreover, Waterson comments that Lévi-Strauss' emphasis on both the material and immaterial wealth of a house is important to note because this stress highlights the necessity to consider "the relation of 'houses' both to systems of economic stratification and to hierarchies of status, prestige or ritual power" (1995, p.51). González-Ruibal comes to a similar assumption when he is reflecting on the nature of houses in the context of ranked social hierarchies:

> Although Lévi-Strauss does not clearly state that house societies must be hierarchical, all the examples he uses, and the very definition of house society he offers, with its emphasis on wealth – I would say 'capital,' following Bourdieu […] due to its multifarious character (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic) – obviously point to a ranked social organization (2006, pp.144, 145).

Seen this way, houses are not only indicative of the economic structures of a certain society; they are at the same time the means to stratify a society. Applying Lévi-Strauss' concept to the domain of Yoknapatawpha County, the reader will see that the image of the house serves as a focal point for establishing social hierarchies and economic structures. It will become clear, then, that Faulkner's fictitious houses reveal something about hierarchies, stratification, and the social order of Yoknapatawpha County. According to González-Ruibal, the following elements should be ideally present to define a certain given community as a 'sociétes à maison'(p. 146, 2006):

1. Ranked systems, or societies that are undergoing major social transformations towards a more hierarchical organization.
2. Unclear or mixed descent systems.
3. Houses must be a key symbolic element in the community at issue. They have to be the focus of all ordinary and extraordinary activities, but especially of rituals and sacrifices, thus displaying defining material features pointing at their symbolic relevance.
4. Related to the latter, a strong investment in houses (as buildings) and clear differences among houses should be noticed. Houses must be an arena for social competition and this may be reflected in prestige materials associated to houses.
5. The existence of titles of nobility, recurrent family names, etc. […]
6. Heirlooms and elements of rank which are inherited.
7. Houses go beyond traditional kin systems and both the female and male lines might be manipulated in order to accrue the house's wealth. Women in house societies usually make a significant contribution in terms of power to the house's capital.
8. The relevance of territory for defining a collective identity, though not decisive, might also point to this kind of social organization.
9. Explicit references to houses as social units.

In the subsequent chapters of this dissertation, it will be demonstrated to which extent Faulkner's imaginary world can be seen as a 'société a maison' as defined by Lévi-Strauss. Nevertheless, one has to bear in mind that Lévi-Strauss' concept is just one critical approach among several others to comprehend the recurrent nature of houses in Faulkner's writings – although the subsequent chapters of this dissertation will provide ample evidence for Lévi-Strauss' theory of a house-based society.

# 5. The House Motif in American Literature.

> Still, the house seems important to me, if only to the extent that it was neglected – symptomatic of a state of mind that, otherwise inaccessible, manifested itself in the concrete images of unconscious behavior. The house became the metaphor of my father's life, the exact and faithful representation of his inner life (Auster 1982, p.9).

In Paul Auster's novel *The Invention of Solitude*, a tribute to the author's deceased father, the unnamed narrator walks through his father's house in order to learn more about his departed father who had died unexpectedly. The protagonist perceives his father's house as a "portrait of an invisible man", as the first section of the book is appropriately entitled for the narrator realizes that the house is like a system of signs that he has to be read in order to comprehend his father's inner world. In this respect, Auster's novel is a fine example to illustrate how house imagery can be used as a means to delineate characters. As Wellek and Warren note: "Setting is environment; and especially domestic interiors, may be viewed as metonymic, or metaphoric, expressions of character. A man's house is an extension of himself. Describe it and you have described him" ([1949] 1975, p.221).

Yet the use of house imagery for character delineation is merely one facet of the house motif. In many major American novels, houses occupy a prominent place and they are used for a whole variety of different purposes. Among them are, for example, Hawthorne's decaying *House of the Seven Gables*, the small log cabin in Thoreau's *Walden*, Poe's gloomy House of Usher, Morrison's haunted 124 Bluestone Road in *Beloved*, the impressive mansion in *The Great Gatsby* by Fitzgerald, the splendid plantation home Tara in Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, and Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, to name but a few.

Basically, a house is an abode and a shelter in which its inhabitants find protection from the whether and climate as well as from the world outside its walls. Architecturally, the term house is only applied to buildings used for habitation, not for edifices where people worship their gods [churches, mosques, or temples]. Sociologically, houses are the focal points of human life and interaction. People grow up in houses and they spend their whole lives in them until they finally die, maybe, in the very same house in which they were born.

As Friedrich asserts, "the image of the house is traditionally an image of stability. Houses protect us and express our true nature; as we build houses we create positive enclosure" (1983, p.65). Cardwell writes that the image of the house "is associated with cults, temples, and tombs, with large ideas about man's fate, the wrath of gods, and tradition and change" (1963, p.3).

In his study *The Conservative Tradition in America*, Guttmann asserts that the image of the house contains the "sense of the past" (1967, p.50). For this author, architectural metaphors are cardinal images used to represent conservative values: "the house is the visible symbol of tradition, of permanence, of man's mastery of the primary environment, of civilization" (1967, pp.49, 50; 1962, p.5). Male also stresses the ability of a house to be an indicator of the past: "If a study of the house as a literary symbol were undertaken, certainly one conclusion would be that the home has consistently represented, whether consciously or not, an attempt to build an integrated, functioning religious experience: a fusion of time and space, investment and speculation, past and present" (1957, p.41).

Houses have always been an integral part of American culture and identity. Since the history of the United States is based on "the issue of how to stake out territory, clear it, cultivate it, and build on it" (Chandler 1991, p.1), the process of making oneself a home was and still is of great importance. Nonetheless, it still took a long time until literary criticism discovered the significance of this symbol.

A groundbreaking work that illustrates the multifarious character of houses is Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* (1958). This phenomenological study shows the complexities of house imagery. It brings into light how we experience intimate spaces and how our perception of houses shapes our thoughts and memories:

> With the house image we are in possession of a veritable principle of psychological integration. Descriptive psychology, depth psychology, psychoanalysis and phenomenology could constitute, with the house, the corpus of doctrines that I have designated by the name of topo-analysis. On whatever theoretical horizon we examine it, the house image would appear to have become the topography of our intimate being ([1958] 1994, p.xxxvi).

In *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard fuses phenomenology with symbolic and archetypal meanings in architecture to convey the relevance of existential spaces.

Apart from Bachelard's book, there are also some other studies that explore the significance of existential space as Bollnow's *Mensch und Raum* (1963), Heidegger's book *Being and Time* (1962) and his essay "Building, Dwelling, Thinking" (1971), and Norberg-Schulz's *Existence, Space, and Architecture* (1971), to quote just the fundamental texts.

Apart from these studies of existential spaces mentioned above, the critical evaluation of the house in American literature came first into existence with the publication of Cohn's study *The Palace or the Poorhouse: The American House as a Cultural Symbol* (1979). Cohn's study deals with both real and fictional dwellings to illustrate the significance of houses in an American context:

> It is the thesis of this study that the house has been, and continues to be, the dominant symbol for American culture. The complexities and the contradictions inherent in the symbol are the complexities and contradictions inherent in American culture. Therefore, to examine what Americans have said about houses, their own and those of other men, is to examine what Americans have said about their culture. In the writings of politicians and reformers, anarchists and feminists, sentimental novelists and social utopians, hucksters and poets, the American house appears and reappears, a potent and flexible resource available for the needs of each (Cohn 1979, p.xi).

Cohn's study is a good vantage point for an exploration of the house motif in American literature. Her study encompasses the writings of many major American authors such as, for instance, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Dreiser, Gilman Perkins, Hawthorne, James, Thoreau, and Wharton, to quote just a few. In addition to that, her study not only analyzes upper class houses but also the housing of the poor, as exemplified in the writings of Cooper, Crane, Wright, and Motley, for example. Unfortunately, Cohn's book does not take into consideration what has been researched by other critics so far like Guttmann or Bachelard, for example.

Published in the very same year as Cohn's study is Eve Ellen Frank's book *Literary Architecture* (1979), which highlights the use of architecture in the writings of Marcel Proust and Henry James. Like Guttmann, Frank demonstrates that architecture is a preserver of values of the past: "[architecture] may represent or stand for memory […] architecture may conquer forgetfulness by embodying the past, by recording the past, or by stimulating recall of the past" (1979, p.246).

Chandler's book *Dwelling in the Text: Houses in American Fiction* (1991) offers an excellent picture of the use of house imagery in major American novels. Although this study primarily deals with upper class habitations, her elaborations on the nature of houses in *The House of the Seven Gables, The Portrait of a Lady, The Awakening, The Age of Innocent, The Professor's House, The Great Gatsby,* and *Absalom, Absalom!* are thorough studies of this subject matter. According to Chandler, this book attempts to show how major American writers have appropriated houses as "structural, psychological, metaphysical, and literary metaphors, [which are] constructing complex analogies between a house and a psyche, house and family structure, house and social environment, house and text" (1991, p.3). Likewise, Chandler writes that "houses are unifying symbolic structures" which define the "relationships of the central characters to one another, to themselves, and to the world […]" (1991, p.1). Moreover, houses have become "stages on which the dramas of sexual politics and class warfare are played out", and as a result of this, houses are frequently the "locus of the central conflicts of American life" (Chandler 1991, p.1).

Although Chandler's book considers Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* and Frank's *Literary Architecture*, she does not refer to those important earlier works published by Cohn and Guttmann, for instance.

Pauline Dewan's book *The House Motif as Setting, Symbol, and Structural Motif in Children's Literature*, published 2004, traces the image of the house in some selected stories written for children. Dewan's book is not important in this discussion of the house motif in American literature.

Yet what exactly did these authors find out about the use of houses in the context of American literature? Cohn answers this question as follows: "The house appeared […] as the emblem of false materialism; it appeared, as well, as the emblem of family and security. But other values were also discoverable, conflicting and confusing values. What some called materialism, others labeled the American Dream" (1979, p.x). Chandler, by contrast, comes to the conclusion that the "house can become everything from the visible hand of destiny to the self-portrait of the builder" (1991, p.18).

As can be explicated from these answers, the house motif is capable of being charged with different meanings ranging from its use as a simple abode to an emblematic representation of a character's or society's state of mind. The following survey highlights various uses of house imagery in American literature. Houses are often the locus of familial or communal life [Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat*, McCullers' *The Ballad of the Sad Café*]. A house can also be a visible record of a character's past [Hawthorne's *The House of Seven Gables*], or a representation of a certain period of time [James' *The Portrait of a Lady*]. In addition, literary houses often mirror an inhabitant's state of mind [Poe's House of Usher] or a character's life [Auster's *The Invention of Solitude*]. A house can also be a symbol of female entrapment and oppression in a patriarchal world [Chopin's *The Awakening*, Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"], criticism of American materialism and society [Thoreau's *Walden*], or simply a marker of social identity [Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby,* Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, and Boyle's *Tortilla Curtain*],

The great diversity of symbolic meanings makes the house an attractive literary motif for an author. As Chandler asserts, the "house is invested with far more than literal significance", it is in "varying degrees personified, animated, or even anthropomorphized" (1991, p.18).

One last aspect should be added to what has been said above. In the world of fiction as well in the real world, the house is not only a shelter, but also the key symbol of wealth and success in Western society. This finds expression in the many mansions and cabins employed in the writings of American authors. As can be seen in Cohn's study of the symbolization of the American house: "The private home is the bulwark of democracy, but the provision of such homes to those who have not earned them subverts the conventional values of labor and reward and devalues the symbol of the house" – which is not very surprising since "at the very roots of the symbol of the American house lies the fact of property" (1979, pp.171, 244). Cohn's statement is important for it explains the motivation of many characters discoverable in American literature who aspire to inhabit a stately house. Since owning a house means to show personal success, the house will always remain the prime marker of social status – as will be shown in the following discussion of the house motif in Faulkner's writings.

# 6. The House Motif in Faulkner

Faulkner's apprentice work as an artist clearly shows influences from such literary predecessors as Poe, James, or Hawthorne, to name but a few. Like these authors, who recurrently employ house imagery and Gothic elements to tell their stories, Faulkner learned to use symbolically charged houses and Gothic features in his fiction to create mood or to delineate characters. The following discussion analyzes the use of houses in a Gothic context as exemplified in Faulkner's early works and refers thus to the origins of the house motif in his body of work.

In some writings, Faulkner masterfully fuses the world of the Gothic with the world of Yoknapatawpha. Yet it is important to note that Faulkner rarely employs the Gothic tradition just for the sake of suspense or as a mere decorative element. Instead, Faulkner uses Gothic features rather to explore social and racial issues – to highlight the cultural character of the Old South. In the Gothic realms of his fiction, then, Faulkner is able to render a nightmarish portrayal of the Old South that is characterized by the "trauma and guilt of race and slavery, or fear of what was then called miscegenation" (Smith 2004, p.8). Yet what are the key features of Faulkner's Gothicism? In *William Faulkner's Gothic Domain*, the author Elizabeth Kerr presents some constant ingredients of Gothic fiction ranging from the Romantic period to the present, which her book also traces in some of Faulkner's novels. Her catalog of Gothic features includes the following aspects:

> […] [a] psychological interest and concern with the irrational and the unconscious, the dream side of the psyche; appalling situations; a Calvinistic Manichean polarity of good and evil and/or ambivalence in the moral attitudes of characters; the abandonment of realism as a major aim; the use of setting and atmosphere to create a mood and stimulate the imagination; the reader's involvement through sharing with the characters the terror and horror which G.R. Thompson considered to be "complementary poles of a single continuum of perception and response" (1979, p.6).

For Kerr, the setting is essential to create mood and to stimulate the reader's mind. Generally, the basic setting of a Gothic tale is a castle or some type of a house. In addition, Fiedler likewise stresses the importance of the house in a Gothic context:

> […] the Southerner, as opposed to the Northerner, does not avoid but seeks melodrama, a series of bloody events, sexual by implication at least, played out in the blood heat of a "long hot summer" against a background of miasmal swamps, live oak, Spanish moss, and the decaying plantation house so dear to the hearts of movie makers […]. The mode of the Southern is Gothic, American Gothic, and the Gothic requires a haunted house at its center. It demands also a symbolic darkness to cloak its action (1969, p.18).

Fiedler's account of some facets characteristic of Southern Gothic is easily applicable to Faulkner for bloody events, darkness, and decaying plantations are basic ingredients of *Sanctuary* and *Absalom, Absalom!*, for instance. Nonetheless, these Gothic novels find literary precursors among some of Faulkner's own stories. As will be shown, many Gothic features of his novels were already used in well-known stories like "A Rose for Emily" and "Red Leaves", as well as in lesser-known stories as "Mistral" and "Evangeline".

The vantage point for this analysis is the short story "Evangeline", which is *Absalom, Absalom!* in embryo. Thus, many features of the later novel are to be seen in an early stage of conception. "Evangeline", probably written before 1931 and Faulkner's first evocation of New World Gothicism, is a haunted house tale set in a small Mississippi village. Faulkner borrowed and modified many aspects characteristic of Old World Gothicism for his rendering of the fall of the house Sutpen as, for instance, a dark and decaying house with an 'aristocratic' name that is disturbed by supernatural events. Basically, "Evangeline" brings to light Henry Sutpen's killing of his sister's [Judith] husband, called Charles Bon, and Henry's subsequent hiding in his father's decaying mansion.

In both the novel and the story, Faulkner substitutes the castle typical of the European Gothic tradition with a decaying big house as the prime location for his narrative. Like the house of Usher, this haunted house is situated isolated from the next village, "The house was about six miles from the village" (US, p.583).

Faulkner's story opens with a telegram informing the unnamed narrator ["I"] about a mysterious ghost, "HAVE GHOST FOR YOU COME AND GET IT NOW LEAVING MYSELF THIS WEEK" (US, p.583). When the narrator arrives at the spot, he learns from his companion [Don] that this ghost haunts a decaying manor, which had once been the seat of a wealthy planter family with an unsavory

history. Don also reveals that on the day of Judith Sutpen's death, who has been the last legitimate heiress to the Sutpen estate, the rotting house "seemed to be whispering: "'Shhhhhh. Miss Judith. Miss Judith. Shhhhhh'" (US, p.592). Moreover, Don adds that on the same day one of the house servants believed she had encountered that ghost when she was trapped within the decaying big house:

> It was late afternoon when she [the Negro servant] came out and found herself locked in the empty house. And while she was trying to get out she heard the sound from upstairs and she began to scream and to run. She said she didn't know what she was trying to do. She said she just ran, back and forth in the dim hall, until she tripped over something near the staircase and fell, screaming, and while she lay on her back beneath the stairwell, screaming, she saw in the air above her a face, a head upside down (US, p.592).

Due to this occurrence, the Sutpen manor was henceforth known to be a haunted house. Nevertheless, the Sutpen building becomes even more mystifying when police dogs mysteriously appear to guard the building and to drive away all those who wanted to prowl around the house, as can be seen in Don's remarks:

> "That dog wasn't a ghost. […] Because it died too. And then there was another police dog there. They [the villagers] would watch each dog in turn get old and die, and then on the day they would find it dead, another police dog would come charging full-fleshed and in midstride around the corner of the house like somebody with a wand or something had struck the foundation stone. I saw the present. It isn't a ghost." "A dog," I said. "A haunted house that bears police dogs like plums on a bush" (US, p.593).

In this story, Faulkner uses a haunted house for the first time [and later again only in *Absalom, Absalom!*]. But Faulkner is too much a realist to keep up this spooky atmosphere for too long. The Gothic element here chiefly serves to arouse the reader's attention. Thus, the narrator fittingly reveals at the end of the very first section that there is neither a ghost nor a haunted house in this Mississippi village:

> And so I did what Don said. I went there and I entered that house. And I was right and Don was right. That dog was a flesh-and-blood dog and that ghost was a flesh-and-blood ghost. It had lived in that house for forty years, with the old negro woman supplying it with food, and no man the wiser (US, p.594).

When the narrator eventually enters this dark house to solve this ghost mystery, an old Negro woman [Raby] accompanies him and leads him to a 'secret chamber' at the top of the house where he meets the ghost [the dying Henry Sutpen]:

> We mounted the stairs. She moved on ahead, surely, invisible. I held to the railing, feeling ahead, my eyeballs aching: suddenly I brushed into her where she stood motionless. "Here's the top," she said. "Aint nothing up here to run into." I followed her again, the soft sound of her bare feet. I touched a wall and heard a door click and felt the door yawn inward upon a rush of stale, fetid air warm as an oven: a smell of old flesh, a closed room. And I smelled something else. But I didn't know what it was at the time, not until she closed the door again and struck a match to a candle fixed upright in a china plate. And I watched the candle come to life and I wondered quietly in that suspension of judgment how it could burn, live, at all in this dead room, this tomblike air. Then I looked at the room, the bed, and I went and stood above the bed, surrounded by that odor of stale and unwashed flesh and of death which at first I had not recognised. […] Then I looked at the man in the bed – the gaunt, pallid, skull-like head surrounded by long unkempt hair of the same ivory color, and a beard reaching almost to his waist, lying in a foul, yellowish nightshirt on foul, yellowish sheets. […] He lay with closed eyelids so thin that they looked like patches of dampened tissue paper pasted over the balls. […] Behind us our shadows loomed crouching high up the scaling, fish-colored wall. […] "It's Henry Sutpen," she said (US, pp.597, 598).

Readers familiar with Faulkner's short fiction will immediately be reminded of the sealed, roseate room in the upper part of Miss Grierson's house in "A Rose for Emily" [written in 1929, published in 1930], where the townspeople discover the remains of Emily's long lost sweetheart, Homer Barron. Decorated like a bridal suite, Homer's body has been kept in that room for about forty years:

> Already we knew that there was one room in that region above stairs which no one had seen in forty years, and which would have to be forced. They waited until Miss Emily was decently in the ground before they opened it.
>
> The violence of breaking down the door seemed to fill this room with pervading dust. A thin, acrid pall as of the tomb seemed to lie everywhere upon this room decked and furnished as for a bridal: upon the valance curtains of faded rose color, upon the rose-shaded lights, upon the dressing table, upon the delicate array of crystal and the man's toilet things backed with tarnished silver, silver so tarnished

> that the monogram was obscured. Among them lay a collar and tie, as if they had just been removed, which, lifted, left upon the surface a pale crescent in the dust. Upon a chair hung the suit, carefully folded; beneath it the two mute shoes and the discarded socks.
>
> The man himself lay in the bed.
>
> For a long while we just stood there, looking down at the profound and fleshless grin. The body had apparently once lain in the attitude of an embrace, but now the long sleep that outlasts love, that conquers even the grimace of love, had cuckolded him. What was left of him, rotted beneath what was left of the nightshirt, had become inextricable from the bed in which he lay; and upon him and upon the pillow beside him lay that even coating of the patient and biding dust.
>
> Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head. One of us lifted something from it, and leaning forward, that faint and invisible dust dry and acrid in the nostrils, we saw a strand of iron-gray hair (CS, pp.129, 130).

Comparing these two excerpts, some remarkable similarities between these stories become apparent that raise the question: did "Evangeline" influence "A Rose for Emily", or vice versa? Although there is no real evidence, one can only guess that "Evangeline" is older than "A Rose for Emily". In his apprentice years as artist, Faulkner wrote two other stories using "Don and I": "Mistral" [1928] and "The Big Shot" [1930]. The publishing dates refer to the earliest date a story is known to exist as listed in Skei's book *William Faulkner: The Short Story Career*. On the other hand, "Don and I" reappear in a late story, "Snow" [1942]. The use of "Don and I" is thus not really indicative of reading a very early Faulkner short story.

However, "A Rose for Emily" is a successful and convincing narrative whereas "Evangeline" is clearly the product of a developing artist who still struggled with plot and subject matter. "Evangeline" is a simply structured story and lacks a Yoknapatawpha setting, whereas "A Rose for Emily" is definitely set in Jefferson. It is hard to believe that Faulkner may have forgotten or neglected to set "Evangeline" in his fictional Yoknapatawpha County. Seen this way, "Evangeline" seems to be written prior to the creation of Yoknapatawpha County and "A Rose for Emily", and may there-fore have influenced the latter story.

However, both stories feature hidden rooms in the upper part of a house where dead or dead-like characters have been kept or hidden for forty years ere a nosy intruder or a group of intruders emerges to invade these rooms.

In addition to that, Faulkner employs the motif of an old character who dies in an upstairs room also in his prose poem “Carcassonne” [see chapter 6.3.1]. In “Evangeline”, Faulkner particularly stresses the olfactory dimension of this secret chamber [“stale, fetid air”, “a smell of old flesh”, “tomblike air”, and an “odor of stale and unwashed flesh and of death”] to make this room appear as a kind of grave. In “A Rose for Emily”, by contrast, the room is pervaded with dust and the implication of the leitmotif ‘dust’ is clear from the very beginning: this dusty room is indeed a grave.

The discovery of the sealed room with the remains of Homer Barron makes “A Rose for Emily” truly a masterpiece of the Southern Gothic. The story’s Gothicism is not only décor but, quite the contrary, the element needed to convey a nightmarish story about the Old South. When the villagers discover the single strand of iron-gray hair on Homer’s dusty pillow, they understand that Emily might have slept next to [or with] Homer’s dead body. The necrophilia aspect lends the story just its final Gothic touch, and Emily’s house becomes a metaphor for the perverted culture and society of the Old South, whose last remnant has just passed away and leaves behind the younger generation, bewildered, confused and unable to understand Miss Emily’s actions. When asked about this story during one of his conferences held at the University of Virginia, Faulkner explains Miss Emily’s bizarre behavior to his students thus:

> […] In this case there was the young girl with a young girl’s normal aspirations to find a love and then a husband and a family, who was brow-beaten and kept down by her father, a selfish man who didn’t want her to leave home because he wanted a housekeeper, and it was a natural instinct of – repressed which – you can’t repress it – you can mash it down but it comes up somewhere else and very likely in a tragic form, and that was simply another manifestation of man’s injustice to man, of the poor tragic human being struggling with its own heart, with others, with its environment, for the simple things which all human beings want. In that case it was a young girl that just wanted to be loved and to love and to have a family (FIU, p.185).

As Faulkner underscores, Emily’s father did not want her to leave his house. As a result, Emily found no love and remained in her father’s empty house for good. Therefore, this house is also a symbol of female repression in a patriarchal order.

Although a great deal of the action in both stories takes place in houses, the house itself in "Evangeline" is never described in detail. Faulkner merely refers to it as the "big decaying house" (p.591), the "empty house" (p.592), or the "haunted house" (p.593), that is "patriarchal and generous enough, but provincial after all" (p.587). At the time of writing "Evangeline", Faulkner was apparently not able to use the full potential of the house motif. Thus, he did not attribute this fictitious with human qualities [though he used this technique in *Absalom, Absalom!*]

In "A Rose for Emily", quite the contrary, the Grierson house is clearly used as a personification of Miss Emily. Once, this solid and decorated house was a marker of Miss Emily's higher social status [gentry], but in her final years, the house is decayed and ceases to be a symbol of the "high and mighty Griersons" (CS, p.122). As the narrator says, the house is just an "eyesore among eyesores" (CS, p.119). For Towner and Carothers, "the house [serves] as a metaphor for its last mistress, whose brief life as a coquette decays into the final passages of the story" (2006, p.68). Serving as an expression of Miss Emily's persona, the house indeed mirrors Emily's physical and mental decay. Like her rotting Neo-Gothic house, Miss Emily herself has become an eyesore, as well. She has become obese and her appearance now is that of a dead-looking woman:

> [Emily is] a small, fat woman in black, with a thin gold chain descending to her waist and vanishing into her belt, leaning on an ebony cane with a tarnished gold head. Her skeleton was small and spare; perhaps that was why what would have been merely plumpness in another was obesity in her. She looked bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of that pallid hue. Her eyes, lost in the fatty ridges of her face, looked like two small pieces of coal pressed into a lump of dough […] (CS, p.121).

Yet Miss Emily's decaying appearance is not only reflected in the rotting exterior of her house, but also in its interior – as the description of the parlor demonstrates:

> They [the board of Aldermen] were admitted by the old Negro into a dim hall from which a stairway mounted into still more shadow. It smelled of dust and disuse – a close, dank smell. The Negro led them into the parlor. It was furnished in heavy, leather-covered furniture. When the Negro opened the blinds of one window, they could see that the leather was cracked; and when they sat down, a faint dust rose

> sluggishly about their thighs, spinning with slow motes in the single-sun-ray. On a tarnished gilt easel before the fireplace stood a crayon portrait of Miss Emily's father (CS, p.120).

In American houses, the parlor is a room for meeting and entertaining guests, but Miss Emily's parlor, however, has long since ceased to be a place for social gathering – as indicated by the closed blinds and the dust that covers the furniture. In fact, the room is as dusty and dark as the room containing Homer's remains. On a metaphorical plane, the parlor mirrors Miss Emily's total isolation from the Jefferson community and her lack of human relationships. Like the disused parlor, the Jefferson community no longer needs Miss Emily. Another item indicating the relationship between Miss Emily and her parlor is the tarnish covering both her ebony cane and the gilt easel supporting the crayon picture of Mr. Grierson.

Although Miss Emily's house has been violated to unveil its secrets, the house itself remains intact at the end of the story. In "Evangeline", on the other hand, the story ends with the complete annihilation of both the house and the last representatives of the Sutpen dynasty when Raby sets the tinder-dry house on fire:

> The whole thing went off like a box of matches. […], and then I turned still half asleep and saw the façade of the house limned in fire, and the erstblind sockets of the windows, so that the entire front of the house seemed to loom stooping above me in a wild and furious exultation. […] The kitchen was already gone and the whole rear of the house was on fire, and the roof too; the light, longdried shingles taking wing and swirling upward like scraps of burning paper, burning out zenithward like inverted shooting stars. […].
>
> We were standing beneath the wall, watching the clapboards peel and melt away, obliterating window after window, and we saw the old negress [Raby] come the window upstairs. She came through fire and she leaned for a moment in the window, her hands on the burning ledge, looking no bigger than a doll, as impervious as an effigy of bronze, serene, dynamic, musing in the foreground of Holocaust. Then the whole house seemed to collapse, to fold in upon itself, melting; the dog passed us again, not howling now. It came opposite us and then turned and sprang into the roaring dissolution of the house without a sound, without a cry.
>
> […] We stood there and watched the house dissolve and liquefy and rush upward in silent and furious scarlet, licking and leaping among the wild and blazing branches of the cedars, so that, blazing, melting too, against the soft, mildstarred sky of summer they too wildly tossed and swirled (US, pp.606-608).

Here, Faulkner reveals influences from Poe's story "Metzengerstein". It strikes that Sutpen's Hundred not only burns, but also melts and becomes liquid until it finally dissolves and thereby eradicates all traces of the Sutpen family. It seems as if a purifying fire was the only way to keep all the dark secrets of the Sutpens from being exposed. As Skei points out, "the Sutpen 'family secret' is too dark to be revealed to a misunderstanding world, because the Sutpen name must be kept bright and stainless" (1985, p.174). The house of Sutpen may be gone, but the name Sutpen will still linger on. In contrast to the novel, where the house is both a metaphor for Sutpen's failure and the racial inequality of the Old South, the house in "Evangeline" merely serves as a metaphor for a decaying Southern family who defends its honor at all costs – even for the price at killing a friend and relative.

According to Ryan's analysis of this story, "Evangeline" offers Faulkner the "possibility of merging the psychic effect of successful Gothic fiction with the historical and social reality of the author" (1983, p.57). This statement is easily applicable to "Mistral", as well. In this short story, Faulkner introduces "Don and I" as narrators in a story with clear Gothic overtones set in a mountain village in northern Italy. Set [not written] about six and a half years prior to the occurrences presented in "Evangeline" (US, p.583), this short story likewise deals with death and despair. In "Mistral", Don and his friend [two Americans] will experience the anguish and passion of a malicious priest who harbors a sexual desire for his beautiful ward and who seems to stop at nothing to get her suitors out of the way.

In section two of the story, Don and his companion enter that village and try to get out of the cold wind that lends the story its name. This is why they decide to go into a dark church: "It was one of those stark, square, stone churches, built by those harsh iron counts and bishops of Lombardy. It was built old, time had not even mellowed it, could not ever mellow it, not all time could have. They might have built the mountains too and invented the twilight in a dungeon underground, in the black ground" (CS, p.857). In his analysis of "Mistral", Volpe links the gloomy church with the protagonist's feelings and perception of Italy:

> Faulkner's description of the church, like most of the descriptions in the story, is an impressionistic rendering of the protagonist's feelings. It captures the young American's sense of Italy as a very old country,

> in which religion and corrupt political power are inextricably blended, an ancient country that bears the weight of humanity's moral history extending back to primeval darkness (2004, p.50).

For the protagonist, the church seems to belong to the past and has long since ceased to be a place for the living – an impression that will be reinforced when the two friends are confronted with the interior of the church:

> The nave, groined upward into the gloom, dwarfed the meager clot of bowed figures. Beyond them, above the steady candles, the Host rose, soaring into sootlike shadows like festooned cobwebs, with a quality sorrowful and triumphant, like wings. There was no organ, no human sound at all at first. They [the parishioners] just knelt there among the dwarfing gloom and the cold, serene, faint light of the candles. They might have all been dead (CS, p.857).

Usually, a church is connected with images of light, purity, and brightness for churches are considered to be beacons of light and hope. This church, however, is a place of darkness that shows no signs of life or hope. The Host, lifted above the priest's head during the gathering, disappears in "sootlike shadows like festooned cobwebs" as if to indicate that God himself has abandoned this place. Moreover, even the parishioners look like "they might have all been dead". In this excerpt, Faulkner's first use of a Gothic setting in his writings at all, the author establishes for the first time a symbolic relationship between a decaying house [church] and a character [the priest]. The dark church is a symbol of the priest's malice, whose unholy desire for his ward made him kill a member of his own parish. In addition to that, the gloomy nature of the priest is reflected in the interior of the presbytery where the two Americans try to find accommodation, as well:

> The presbytery was of stone too, bleak in a rank garden. […] A wooden-faced peasant woman opened the door. She held a candle, the flame leaning inward from the wind. The hall behind her was dark; a stale, chill smell came out of it (CS, p.860). […] When we followed her down the hall we carried with us in our ears the long rush of the recent wind, like in a sea shell. There was no light save the candle which she carried. So that, behind her, we walked in gloom out of which the serrated shadow of a stair on one wall reared dimly into the passing candle and dissolved in mounting serrations, carrying the eye with it up the wall where there was not any light (CS, p. 861). […]

> […] The whisper in our ears seemed to fill the room with wind. Then we realized that it was the wind that we heard, the wind itself we heard, even though the single window was shuttered tight. It was as though the quiet room were isolated on the ultimate peak of space, hollowed murmurous out of chaos and the long dark fury of time. It seemed strange that the candle flame should stand so steady above the wick (CS, p.862).

Like the church, the presbytery is just another dark and hostile place for the Americans. It appears as if the whole building is pervaded with the fierce presence of the priest – as indicated by the ever present wind which also serves as a symbol for the priest. As Volpe notes, the closer the Americans "come to the epicenter of the tale they have heard [about the priest] – […] – the more intense is the icy wind and the aura of Gothic horror" (2004, p.52). In the Gothic realm of the presbytery, all the dark rooms and corridors do reflect the Americans' insecurities about their whereabouts and reinforce their feeling of being alone in an alien and hostile environment. As seen in "Evangeline", Faulkner illuminates dark rooms only with the dim light of candles, which hardly seem to penetrate the darkness around.

Taking for granted that "Mistral" was written prior to "Evangeline", as Ryan suggests in his article (1983, p.65), one can conclude that this story provides the origin of a literary motif [symbolic relationship between a decayed house and a character] that Faulkner successfully used in "A Rose for Emily". In April 1930, Faulkner published another story that uses the same motif, again: "Red Leaves".

In this short story, a grounded steamboat becomes the accommodation of a lethargic and degenerated Indian chief, Moketubbe. Like Miss Emily, Moketubbe is obese and has become an eyesore, as well. His mental and physical decay is reflected in both the exterior and the interior of his dilapidated steamboat:

> The house sat on a knoll, surrounded by oak trees. The front of it was one storey in height, composed of the deck house of a steamboat which had gone ashore and which Doom, Issetibbeha's father, had dismantled with his slaves and hauled on cypress rollers twelve miles home overland. It took them five months. His house consisted at the time of one brick wall. He sat the steamboat broadside on to the wall, where now the chipped and flaked gilding of the rococo cornices arched in faint splendor above the gilt lettering of the stateroom names above the jalousied door (CS, p.317). […] What had been the saloon of the steamboat was now a shell, rotting slowly; the polished

> mahogany, the carving glinting momentarily and fading through the mold in figures cabalistic and profound; the gutted windows were like cataracted eyes. It contained a few sacks of seed or grain, and the fore part of the running gear of a barouche, to the axle of which two C-springs rusted in graceful curves, supporting nothing. In one corner a fox cub ran steadily and soundlessly up and down a willow cage; three scrawny gamecocks moved in the dust, and the place was pocked and marked with their dried droppings (CS, p.324).

As shown above, Faulkner once more uses dark and gloomy spaces within a decaying edifice to reflect the very nature of an important villainous character, Moketubbe. Suspected to have poisoned his own father in order to become the new Chief, Moketubbe is at least as reckless and vicious a character as the unholy priest in “Mistral”. Of particular interest in the context of decaying houses is the fact that all the last three Chickasaw Chiefs [Doom, Issetibbeha, and Moketubbe] lived in this stranded steamboat – and not in a piece of native architecture.

Since steamboats are linked with white man’s culture, the rotting steamboat in “Red Leaves” is used on a metaphorical plane to indicate that the Indians’ way of life has been thoroughly invaded by corrupting European influences. With every succeeding generation since Doom’s first contact with the white man, these influences [alcohol, money, slavery] have grown stronger and the Chickasaw tribe has degenerated more and more. In the end, this spiritual and physical decay led to the loss of the Indian native identity and thus to their complete disappearance.

After the publication of “Red Leaves” in 1930, Faulkner never again used a symbolic decaying house – character relationship or a Gothic setting in his short stories any more, whereas his novels, by contrast, have just started to employ Gothic features and settings [*Sanctuary, Light in August,* and *Absalom, Absalom!*]. This aspect has largely been covered by Faulkner scholarship. A survey of literary criticism dealing with these Gothic novels is presented at the end of this chapter.

As illustrated above, Faulkner’s stories include several features that are clearly derived from the Gothic tradition. Although the Gothicism of these four stories is in the eye of the beholder, there are nonetheless some recurrent Gothic elements to discover in these stories that need to be discussed in this chapter. For one thing, Faulkner uses dark and decaying houses in which dead characters are kept or where dead-like characters hide themselves from their society.

All of these short stories emphasize the darkness within interior spaces. Faulkner thus designates places in which time has ceased to exist and which stand in a stark contrast to the world outside where time still goes on and things change. This can be seen, for instance, in the dark parlor in "A Rose for Emily" [an image Faulkner reused in *Flags in the Dust* / *Sartoris*], in the dark and lifeless rooms within the Sutpen manor, in the rotten interior of Moketubbe's steamboat, and in the darkness within the church and the presbytery in "Mistral". Therefore, Miss Emily, Moketubbe, and Henry Sutpen are characters who belong to the past since they cannot cope with the present. This is why they hide themselves in dark places where time is no longer of any meaning. In addition to that, the reader likewise discovers dark room imagery in Faulkner's later work. See, for instance, Miss Rosa's office (AA), Hightower's bungalow, and Joanna Burden's house (LIA). Further information about this issue are presented in studies by Ruberol (1984, pp.267–278), Gutting (1992, pp. 113-121, and Polk ([1996] 1998, pp.22-98).

Moreover, all the houses rendered for these characters are symbolically charged edifices that reveal something about the characters who inhabit them or about the society these characters live within. Miss Emily's house, to begin with, is both a symbol of a bygone era as well as a symbol of female repression in a patriarchal society. Moketubbe's decaying steamboat is a symbol of the Indians' infection with white man's culture that led to the moral and spiritual decay of the native population of Faulkner's fictional county. The rotting and burning Sutpen house, however, is symbolic of the moral decay of a once wealthy planter family in the South. Faulkner also used symbolically decaying houses in his portrayals of the downfalls of Jefferson's legendary plantation dynasties like the Greniers, Compsons, Sutpens, or the Sartorises [see chapter 6.1.1].

Furthermore, the image of a burning house has also become a recurrent motif in Faulkner's works [Miss Burden's house (LIA), Popeye's parental home (SAN), the first Sartoris house (UNV), Sutpen's Hundred (AA), and the Compson mansion ("Compson Appendix", MAN)].

Other elements introduced in these short stories that have became major features in Faulkner's later work is the use of house related imagery like windows [see chapter 6.3.3] and doors [see chapter 6.3.2], for example.

One has to bear in mind that these Gothic stories are rather atypical of Faulkner's works. Although Faulkner continued to employ Gothic elements in his novels, these features became subtler. Windows, doors, and decayed houses still do their work – but less melodramatically as in his early fiction.

In the following chapters, the reader will experience the significance of the house motif and related imagery in the Yoknapatawpha context. Provided with Faulkner's first uses of the house motif, the reader will be able to see how the Southern author developed his very own and unique use of this particular motif.

The only book-length study dealing solely with Gothicism in Faulkner published so far is Elizabeth Kerr's *William Faulkner's Gothic Domain* (1979). Apart from chapter two, "Faust in Mississippi", Kerr's study, however, is a highly uneven treatment of this topic since it discovers Gothicism in novels that have no Gothic qualities at all [e.g. the Snopes trilogy]. A good vantage point for studying the Gothic in Faulkner is Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1969) which gives insight into the Gothicism of *Sanctuary* and *Absalom, Absalom!*. Critical comments on *Sanctuary*, Faulkner's first novel that borrows elements from the Gothic, are given in these articles: Frazier's "Gothicism in *Sanctuary*: The Black Pall and the Crab Table" (1980), Seed's "The Evidence of Things Seen and Unseen: William Faulkner's *Sanctuary*" (1980), Heller's "Mirrored Worlds and the Gothic in Faulkner's *Sanctuary"*(1989) Machinek's "William Faulkner and the Gothic Tradition" (1989), though this article adds little new to this topic, and, last but not least, Sundquist's "*Sanctuary:* An American Gothic" (1995).

The Gothicism of *Absalom, Absalom!* is dealt with in the following texts: Putzel's "What is Gothic about *Absalom, Absalom!*" (1971), Pitavy's excellent article "The Gothicism of *Absalom, Absalom!*: Rosa Coldfield Revisited" (1980), Torsney's "The Vampire Motif in *Absalom, Absalom!*" (1984), Donaldson's text "Making a Spectacle: Welty, Faulkner and Southern Gothic" (1997), Bailey's *American Nightmares: The Haunted House Formula in American Popular Fiction* (1999), Lloyd Smith's study *American Gothic Fiction: An Introduction* (2004), Itoh's "Poe, Faulkner, and Gothic America" (2005), and Coss' "Sutpen's Sentient House" (2005), to quote just the basic texts.

## 6.1 Private Houses in Faulkner

Those who start reading Faulkner for the first time will discover the names of some private houses in Faulkner's fictional world time and again. Among them are, for instance, the Sartoris house, Sutpen's Hundred, and the Snopes's mansion, to name a few. Like their public counterparts, Faulkner's private houses are multi-faceted symbols that are used for very different purposes. In this context, Gutting notes, "Beyond its function as a spatial expression of an individual character, the fictional [private] house may express, in Faulkner's work, the values and state affairs of a whole family or generation" (1992, p.99). Since many of Faulkner's novels belong to the literary branch of the 'Southern family romance' (King 1980, pp.77-145), there practically has to be a symbolic house at the very center of these narratives in order to tell these stories about the South.

The following chapters not only highlight the most recurrent private houses in Yoknapatawpha County, but they also focus on lesser-known private houses inhabited by minor characters, as well. As a result of this, the reader is able to ascertain the social stratification of Faulkner's fictional county on the basis of the kind of dwelling each of these characters inhabit.

### 6.1.1. Plantation Houses

Many stories sharing an antebellum Southern plantation setting employ the image of an impressive pillared plantation house located at the end of a winding, tree lined road. Apparently, the common image of the plantation with a big house at its symbolic center seems to be unalterably determined by stories which glorify and idealize the world of antebellum South – as exemplified, for instance, in the books by authors as diverse as Tucker, Mitchell, Kirke Paulding, and, most apparently, Pendleton Kennedy. Yet the fictional and the actual conception of the Southern plantation house differ in many ways. And because of that, this chapter first distinguishes between historical truth and representations of Southern plantations in literature, before Faulkner's plantation houses will be analyzed in detail.

In her study of the plantation mistress, Clinton presents the generic design of a Southern plantation house. She calls this edifice the "showpiece" of the plantation because it represents the planter's wealth and social status. Her study renders the conception of plantation houses and their outbuildings as follows:

> The style and size of these homes varied from region to region and period to period, but generally plantation houses were substantial two- or three story structures. Most had spacious receiving halls on the ground floor. Dining rooms, parlors, libraries, music rooms, and sitting rooms were located off the central hall; bedrooms and nurseries, on the upper floor. Many mansions had porches on both upper and lower stories. Most homes were equipped with fireplaces in every room. A handsome staircase in the center of the house was often supplemented by a back stairs for servant use. Some homes had basement storerooms. […] The manor house was actually one of the many buildings on the property. In addition to the "Big House" – the term generally used to designate the planter's home regardless of its size – most Southern estates also included extensive outbuildings: barns, stables, workshops, and warehouses. Slave cabins were built at a convenient distance from the master's home. Many planters also provided nursery and hospital facilities for their slaves. The Big House often had a detached kitchen, and on larger estates separate smokehouses and storehouses were erected (1982, p. 17,18).

In Clinton's view, the generic plantation house was conceived of a large building with an appealing internal design that served to make a big impression on visitors. Furthermore, Clinton's rendering of the 'Big House' and its outbuildings is congruous with building plans of antebellum plantations as presented, for example, in Ruzicka's study of Faulkner's fictional architecture. As this critic points out, "In the cultural structure of the South, the space of everyday existence is based on the domain, reflecting the family as the center. The typical 19th century Southern farm is demonstrably topological, with a free but balanced distribution of central house and outbuildings over the site" (1985, p.9). Gaines also analyzes the image of the Southern plantation house. His study begins with an account of some stereotypes that appear recurrently in literary portrayals of plantation houses. Even though this study was first published in 1924, Gaines's portrayal of the Southern plantation house points out many clichés which countless authors have since then attributed to a presumably realistic depiction of a typical Southern plantation house:

> In the main, however, certainly in stories laid in late antebellum times, the mansion is conventional. Commonly the house is a large, two-story, rectangular edifice, of either brick or frame, with an impressive width of porch and great white columns, usually Doric, though the entablature varies. Often a small platform above the main entrance gives the effect of a miniature piazza on the second story. Many of the mansions of colonial romance are constructed of imported brick with prodigious thickness of walls. Sometimes the central mansion is flanked with wings, one story in height, which may be joined to the central portion by arbor-like passages. The tradition employs literally the beauty of the landscape-garden; the distant approach through the two avenues of trees, the shrubbery of the lawn, the gardens for flowers, the walks, not infrequently the fountains, the terraces, the offices and out-buildings in picturesque design, the gabled end of a barn seen through a vista of branches, negro huts in quaint arrangement, […] – all these are fairly common materials for the tradition (Gaines 1925, pp.166-167).

Unlike those idealized images of plantation houses that Gaines criticizes in American stories with late antebellum settings, his study also brings to light the actual situation of the Southern plantation house, as the following excerpt shows:

> The South was no more thickset with elegant mansions than Elizabethan England was crowded with Kenilworth castles. […] There was among the wealthier classes a fairly well defined architectural ideal, approximated, if not realized, on many estates. Columns were greatly favored, […], and over the plantation zone as a whole there was a passion for shade, for flowers, for attractive grounds. […] In general we may conclude that while plantation architecture varied from the double log house to the colonnaded mansion, the usual residence was commodious in a rambling fashion but had no great distinction without, no great luxury within (1925, pp.168, 169).

As Gaines's study indicates, the southern plantation house was not always and necessarily a place of grandeur and splendor but, first and foremost, a home. Clinton's rendering of the "Big House" is also permeated with the very kind of romanticized idealization so prevalent in the 'moonlight and magnolia' type of Southern literature. In fact, the plantation house chiefly served as a habitat and shelter that provided the space for family life. In this respect, Gaines states that there was hardly a home of beauty in Virginia during the 17th century. Although wealth had increased and some 'genteel homes' were built, these distinguished

houses were not common. Moreover, even the houses of wealthy planters in the lower Mississippi Valley resembled “neat cottages” (1925, p.169). The ‘Big House’ located on top of a small hill overlooking the gardens and outbuildings is thus rather a romanticized ideal than empirical actuality, for the majority of plantation houses were of modest design and architecture, as Eaton’s study shows:

> It is an error to think that the majority of Southerners, or even of the small planter class, in 1860 dwelt in imposing houses of the Greek Revival style. On the contrary, the typical planter lived in a simple frame house, at times unpainted, without any pretense to architecture. The town and city homes of absentee planters in the cotton belt were often white-pillared mansions with Greek façades so familiar to romance, but their country residences were utilitarian structures, even constructed at times of roughly hewn logs. […] The chief reason for the failure of the planters to build attractive and durable homes on the cotton plantations was the air of impermanency about these habitations. Many planters regarded their homes as temporary abiding places until the cream of fertility of the soil had been absorbed and then they would sell out and move farther west to virgin land (1975, p.411).

Like Gaines’ study, Eaton’s book likewise deconstructs the romantic stereotype of an imposing white mansion on top of a hill. Calvert also offers a description of a Southern plantation house that contrasts strongly with idealized representations:

> The big house was usually unpainted, with oiled paper instead of glass in the windows, doors badly hung and lacking proper hardware. Sanitary arrangements can be imagined. The slaves lived in cabins not much inferior, but much smaller. There were no books or newspaper, or other imported amenities. This was the typical mansion of the middling planter […] (Calvert 2006).

In view of the discrepancies between fictional representations of plantations in literature on the one hand and historical truth on the other hand, it is appropriate to research where all these idealized images of the Southern plantation originate.

In *Cavalier and Yankee. The Old South and American National Character,* Taylor highlights a certain type of literature that emerged by the 1830s and which he describes as the ‘plantation legend’. It includes a “set of popular beliefs about the Southern planter, the plantation family and what was assumed to be the aristocratic social system which existed in the South” (1969, p.148).

The plantation legend expressed a yearning for "intellectual distinction, genteel taste, private and public decorum" (Taylor 1969, p.146). At its very heart, the plantation legend not only mystified the planter who, as a cavalier, "had to kneel down before the altar of femininity and familial benevolence" (Taylor 1969, p.148) but also women ["[who] were projected into the center of the plantation legend and the plantation became a kind of matriarchy" (Taylor 1969, p.148)] and slaves who were rendered as inferior, helpless and dependent human beings to justify the principle of slavery. As King notes, "The process of sentimentalization was reflected in both the image of the woman and the slave. All were made part of the family. […] [Thus], slave-holding became emblematic of a higher concern for a helpless and uncivilized race whom the Southern 'fathers' and 'mothers' gently but firmly disciplined" (1980, p.27). This "white male discourse of the plantation" (Müller-Hartmann 1993, p.122), also referred to as the 'moonlight and magnolia' school, rendered a distorted reality of the South to wane its social deficiencies.

After the Reconstruction period, there was a popular literature called 'New South Creed' which emphasized once again the cultural distinctiveness of the Old South: "While the rest of the nation was becoming increasingly heterogeneous, the South prided itself on its aristocratic origins and bemoaned the destruction of the aristocratic way of life" (King 1980, p.29). In this respect, 'New South Creed' can be considered as "the post-Reconstruction expression of the Southern attempt to square the cultural circle, to combine the best of the Old South with the spirit of modern capitalism" (King 1980, p.30).

At the beginning of the 20th century, there was a paradigm shift in the way the Old South was represented in literature. Southern authors and intellectuals then dealt with the reality of Southern life in their writings. This new type of literature, labeled the 'Southern family romance' (King 1980, p.7), demystified and rejected Southern traditions in order to get to reality. In this respect, Southern writers and intellectuals after the late 1920s were "engaged in an attempt to come to terms not only with the inherited values of the Southern tradition but also with a certain way of perceiving and dealing with the past, […]. Put another way, the relationship between present and past which the Renaissance writers explored was fraught with ambivalence and ambiguity" (King 1980, p.7).

Of paramount interest in the context of the family romance is Faulkner's body of work since his portrayal of plantation life has much to say about Southern history. Unlike other Southern writers who excluded blacks from their writings, Faulkner included them. Moreover, Faulkner revised old stereotypes but, at the same time, he created new ones such as the caring house servant Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury* (Müller-Hartmann 1993, p.182). For a critical evaluation of Faulkner's contribution to the Southern Renaissance consult Müller-Hartmann's dissertation "Race in Southern Literature, 1890 – 1940" (1993, pp.182-198).

Since the plantation system was the focus and basis for antebellum Southern society [and therefore the economic backbone of Faulkner's fictional county], it is important to shed some light upon the structure of antebellum southern society,

> In that era, Southern society was pyramidal. At the top were plantation owners with large slaveholdings (usually calculated as 50 or more), who managed the land, established the economy, and kept control by amassing and retaining a vast majority of the wealth and power. […] But in the caste system of that society, the enslaved blacks had their counterparts among whites of considerably less wealth and power than the plantation owners: the yeoman farmers, who might themselves own one or two slaves but who often worked alongside to them, and the poor whites, despised by blacks and whites alike, who often unsuccessfully tried to scrabble out a living in the harder clay of northern Mississippi and whose indolence in some cases could make them almost totally dependent on the kindness of others (Kinney 1996, p.8).

According to Eaton, the planter status was based on the ownership of twenty or more slaves engaged in agriculture (1975, p.390). Meier and Rudwick confirm this statement and they show that the majority of Southern slaveholders could not be called planters since in 1860, 88 percent of Southern slaveholder "held fewer than twenty slaves, 72 percent held fewer than ten, and nearly 50 percent held fewer than five." In addition to that, "most of those in the planter class owned between twenty and fifty slaves, approximately 10,000 owned fifty or more, and only 3,000 persons owned more than a hundred slaves" (1966, p.57). In this respect, it becomes clear that antebellum South was "predominantly a region of small independent farmers" while "large slaveholders were very few in number and comparable to the millionaires of modern America" (Eaton 1975, p.389).

In light of this, one has to be careful to designate Faulkner's slaveholders as planters since the only character who actually owns twenty slaves is Sutpen (AA, p.28). Although Faulkner elaborately deals with slaveholders in his works, his writings almost never tell how many slaves his plantations owners possess.

Even though Jefferson's first families like the Sartoris or the Compsons are frequently referred to as aristocrats, they are not aristocratic at all. Instead, these families constitute a 'pseudo-aristocracy'. According to Eaton's study, there was hardly a titled person who made a permanent residence in the New World (1975, p.52). In addition to that, Eaton asserts that modern research has discredited the old idea that the Southerners were principally descended from aristocratic origins, and he explains the emergence of a pseudo-aristocracy in the Old South thus:

> It is much more to the credit of the Southern aristocracy of the eighteenth century, however, that most of its members arose by their own efforts from virile middle-class stock than that they were transplanted from a decadent aristocracy of the Old World. The development of a native aristocracy in the Southern colonies was aided by the continuous operation of large plantations tilled by slaves and protected until the middle of the eighteenth century from disintegration by the laws of primogeniture and entail (1975, p.54).

Eaton's explanation of the emergence of a pseudo-aristocracy in the Old South is also applicable to Yoknapatawpha's 'native aristocracy' of which no one had aristocratic roots in the Old World. Instead, early planters like the Sartoris, Greniers, or Compsons were plain folks who chanced to establish plantations and thus rose to a group of leading families who had a strong influence on the social and economic structure of Yoknapatawpha County, as will be seen in the following.

In his study of the plantation house in American literature, Cardwell writes that "close to the heart of William Faulkner's ambiguous vision of the South", stands a metaphoric big plantation house:

> In Faulkner, the [big plantation] house may be expressive of dignity, peace, comfort, and power, as it usually was to the propagandists of the Old South. […] The system that supported the house is, in Faulkner, stained by craft, arrogance, hypocrisy, and force; and the history of the house is marred by evidences of cupidity, pride, miscegenation, incestuous love, and bloodshed (1969, p.13).

If one considers the image of the plantation house in Faulkner's writings dealing with the Sartorises, Compsons, McCaslins, or Sutpens, one has to agree with Cardwell's statement for all these prominent plantation houses are symbols of the Old South – and hence emblematic of its slave system and its patriarchal order. It is important to note that Faulkner's fictional plantations do not reflect the splendor of Tidewater and avoid thus that kind of idealization and sentimentalization, which is so typical of the 'moonlight and magnolia' school of the eighteenth century. This becomes clear in an interview he gave at the University of Virginia in 1957. When asked about the origins of his short story "Was", Faulkner said that it was his intention to show his country as it really was in those times:

> The elegance of the colonial plantation didn't exist in my country. My country was still frontier. The plantation, the columned porticos, that was Charleston and Natchez. But my country was still frontier. People lived from day to day, with a bluff and crude hardiness, but with certain simplicity. Which to me is very interesting because the common picture of the South is all magnolias and crinoline and Grecian portals and things like that, which was true only around the fringes of the South. Not in the interior, the back wood (FIU, p.131).

In his study of the image of the plantation in Faulkner's works, Aiken confirms Faulkner's statement about plantation houses given above and this critic adds,

> The Lafayette County countryside was dotted with antebellum plantation houses, few of which had ever been elegant, but many of which seemed to have been grand as evidenced by their size. Throughout Faulkner's lifetime, most of these houses sat unpainted, and some of them abandoned and decaying. All of the big houses had legendary stories about the people who had built them (1979, p.193).

In Faulkner, the reader recurrently traces the image of an unpainted and decaying plantation house that is invested with an unsavory family history. Often, Faulkner employs this image allegorically to render the downfall of the Old South. In this context, Aiken states, "Houses, [...], were among the landscape images that Faulkner used to convey impressions of this leadership decline and failure" (1979, p.198). In this respect, it is important to note that the physical decay of these houses is also symbolic of the decline of the families who inhabit these edifices.

As Faulkner's maps to his literary terrain demonstrate, all these fictitious plantations are set somewhere in the outskirts of Jefferson [see, for instance, the map published in *Absalom, Absalom!*]. Since Faulkner's maps show where these plantations can be found topographically and while his stories express how remote these places are set from the town center, one is able to discover significant parallels between Yoknapatawpha County and the empirical world of Oxford and Lafayette County. As Simpson notes, "the fictional county resembles the real one without being identical to it" (1970, p.47). In this respect, it is important to note that Faulkner's 'legendary' plantations are set in the northwestern sector of Yoknapatawpha County. This sector, to which belongs the fecund bottom of the Tallahatchie River, includes the Sartoris place, Sutpen's Hundred, the Burden farm, and, in all likelihood, both the Compson plantation and the Backus Harriss Stevens' estate. "Dotted with plantations, this […] [sector] represents the domain of the once leading group of Yoknapatawpha and of the Deep South in general: it is the space of the planter aristocracy, the traditional elite of the South who lost their social and economic influence with the loss of the Civil War and its impact" (Gutting 1992, p.125). This pattern corresponds with Faulkner's home county. As Aiken points out, " the principal plantation areas are in the northern and western portions of Yoknapatawpha, which also are the principal plantation areas of Lafayette County" (1979, p.190).

The northeastern sector, by contrast, is the place where Faulkner located the McCaslin-Edmonds. As Gutting writes, "the McCaslin-Edmonds plantation is […] a counterpoint to the plantations located in the rich bottom land of the northeast. […] The mere location of the McCaslin-Edmonds estate indicates its essential difference from the estates of Sutpen or Sartoris" (1992, p.150). This sector also encompasses the McCallum farm and the region known as Beat Four.

Faulkner located the Old Frenchman's place in the southeastern region of Yoknapatawpha County. This is also the region where the places of many poor white farmers can be found like, for example, the Tulls, Armstids, or Bundrens.

The southwestern area of Yoknapatawpha is a region of pine hills and bare land. There are no houses, small farms, plantations, or roads located in this part of Faulkner's fictitious county.

The oldest plantation in Faulkner's fictional county, to begin with, is the Old Frenchman's place near Frenchman's Bend. Once a place of splendor in the past, the Old Frenchman's place of today is nothing more than a shabby ruin – symbolizing thus the bygone era of the Old South's plantation society:

> Frenchman's Bend was a section of river-bottom country lying twenty miles southeast of Jefferson. Hill-cradled and remote, definite yet without boundaries, straddling into two counties and owning allegiance to neither, it had been the original grant and site of a tremendous pre-Civil War plantation, the ruins of which – the gutted shell of an enormous house with its fallen stables and slave quarters and overgrown gardens and brick terraces and promenades – were still known as the Old Frenchman's place, although the original boundaries now existed only on an old faded records in the Chancery Clerk's office in the county court house in Jefferson, and even some of the once-fertile fields had long since reverted to the cane-and-cypress jungle from which their first master had hewed them.
>
> […] and all that remained […] was the river bed which his [Louis Grennier – the 'Old Frenchman'] slaves had straightened for almost ten miles to keep his land from flooding, and the skeleton of the tremendous house which his heirs-at-large had been pulling down and chopping up – walnut newel posts and stair spindles, oak floors which fifty years later would have been almost priceless, the very clapboards themselves – for thirty years now for firewood (HAM, pp.3, 4).

Not only were the big house and its outbuilding seized by decay and demolished by people who needed its boards for firewood, but also the fields, which yielded the plantation its wealth, had been left for ruin for decades (Gates 1968, p.45).

At the end of the 19th century, this wrecked plantation was owned by Will Varner. Yet in the first decade of the 20th century, however, Varner gave this place as a dowry to Flem Snopes when he was to marry Varner's pregnant daughter. Later, Flem [by way of machinations] exchanges this place inter alia for Ratliff's interest in a restaurant in Jefferson – a business transaction that makes Flem move to Jefferson where he finally finds his way to the top of the town's social pyramid.

Faulkner introduced the Old Frenchman's place in his fiction for the first time as a secret hideout for a gang of bootleggers in his sixth novel, *Sanctuary* – a book he wrote nine years prior to the publication of *The Hamlet.* Embedded within the context of *Sanctuary*, the Old Frenchman's place then serves as an "allegorical miniature of the modern wasteland that covers the nobility the house

was designed to represent in the past. Thus, it is possible to regard Grenier's decayed plantation as a spatial metaphor for the downfall of the Old South and its particular system of plantation economy" (Gutting 1992, p.169).

The next important plantation house to be considered is the Sartoris home, a place that Ruzicka calls the "archetype of the Southern manor house" in Yoknapatawpha County (1987, p.19). The Sartoris house is a metaphor for the legendary Colonel John Sartoris (1823-1876), notorious defender of the old order of the South. Set four miles apart from Jefferson and rebuilt at the same place where the Yankees had burned it during the Civil War, the Sartoris house still represents "the visible survival of a vanished life" (Kerr 1969, p.38). For Gutting, the Sartoris house represents the home of a family "who dwells in an enclosed space of the past, imprisoned in myth and family legends" (1992, p.131).

Although it was rebuilt after the Civil War, the Sartoris house is nonetheless a constant reminder of antebellum South. This becomes particularly clear in the novel *The Unvanquished*, where Drusilla remarks that the Sartoris house is "the aura of Father's dream" (UNV, p.220). Thus she refers to the old Colonel himself, whose dream was to preserve a world which has long since been obliterated by history. The difference between the glorious past and the rather sober postbellum era is rendered in the lifelessness inside the new house because it has ceased to be a place for social gatherings and normal family life: "[the] house itself was still and serenely benign, and he [Old Bayard] mounted to the empty, colonnaded veranda and crossed it and entered the high spacious hallway. The house was silent, richly desolate of motion or any sound" (FID, p.11). The deserted parlor, which had been "constantly in use" in John Sartoris' days, has now turned into a lifeless room that is so eerie that it frightens the twins Bayard and John because in the minds of the boys, "the room was associated with death" (FID, pp.59, 60). There is also a room in the attic of the house, which old Bayard seldom visits. When Bayard goes up there, he usually has to make entries about deceased family members which he puts down on the yellowed papers of the old family chronicles which are being kept there [see also chapter 6.3.1]:

> The room was cluttered with indiscriminate furniture – chairs and sofas like patient ghosts holding lightly in dry and rigid embrace yet

> other ghosts – a fitting place for dead Sartorises to gather and speak among themselves of glamorous and old disastrous days. […]
>
> Thus each opening was in a way ceremonial, commemorating the violent finis to some phase of his family's history, and while he struggled with the stiff lock it seemed to him that a legion of ghosts breathed quietly at his shoulder, and he pictured a double line of them with their arrogant identical faces waiting just beyond a portal and stretching away toward the invisible dais where Something sat waiting the latest arrival of them; […] (FID, pp.93, 94).

This house seems to be haunted not only by the ghost of old Colonel John Sartoris, but also by the ghosts of all the dead Sartorises. As Ruzicka notes, old Bayard's visit to this room is similar to a visit to a grave: "It is a sacramental visit to a time enclosure, performed with a number of sacred objects and with the infrequency of the last sacraments" (1987, p.38). Seen this way, the Sartoris house not only represents the past, it virtually keeps the past alive – and thus all its inhabitants are in a kind of timeless hiatus.

The Sartoris house appears chiefly in the novels *Flags in the Dust*, and *The Unvanquished*. Taken together, both novels cover a time span ranging from the Civil War to World War I and render the slow decline of an important family. Moreover, the Sartoris plantation is also used as a setting for the short stories "There was a Queen" and "My Grandmother Millard and General Bedford Forrest and the Battle of Harrykin Creek". "There was a Queen" serves as a kind of coda to Faulkner's portrayal of the Sartoris and concludes this family saga. This short story shows the passing of the last member of the Sartoris family, Virginia Du Pre [Aunt Jenny], "who was ninety years old and who lived in a wheelchair beside a window above the flower garden" (CS, p.727). In the first quarter of the 20th century, however, this house has become a place absent of any male Sartorises – which marks the end of this famous but also notorious dynasty:

> […] the huge, square house, the premises, lay somnolent, peaceful, as they had lain for almost a hundred years, since John Sartoris had come from Carolina and built it. And he had died in it and his son Bayard had died in it, and Bayard's son John and John's son Bayard in turn had been buried from it even though the last Bayard didn't die there.
>
> So the quiet was now the quiet of women-folks (CS, p.727).

What is true for the male Sartorises is also true for the male black servants in the Sartoris house for all of them are dead, too. The house is kept intact by Elnora, the eldest black servant who turns out to be old Bayard's half-sister ["though possibly but not probably neither of them knew it, including Bayard's father" (CS, p.727)]. Elnora's realm is the kitchen – in Faulkner a typical place where black characters discuss what is going on in their master's family. It is her "vision of the characters and events that Faulkner uses to […] evoke the aura of [the] grand, moral tradition" of the Sartorises in the context of this short story (Volpe 2004, p.95).

Unlike the male Sartorises, Aunt Jenny represents the finest qualities of the Old South. When the Union army had burned Miss Jenny's house during the Civil War, she came all the way from Carolina with a basket "with some flower seeds and two bottles of wine and them colored window panes" (CS, p.733) [see also chapter 6.3.3]. She dies at the end of the story when she has realized that her kin's moral code has decayed for Narcissa is little concerned about personal integrity. Yet aunt Jenny's death has a wider cultural significance, for she is the last representative of the old order. As Matthews notes: "The passing of queens like Aunt Jenny signals the break-up of an aristocracy whose pretense to exemption from the world of social change and economic exchange conceals their continued enjoyment of privilege as the product of oppression" (1991, pp.14, 15). Whereas other significant plantations like Sutpen's Hundred or the Compson farm were seized by decay or burned down at the beginning of the 19$^{th}$ century, the Sartoris house is still intact when the last descendant of the white line of this family dies. It is thus one of the few remaining landmarks of the Old South and its order.

In this context, Gutting asserts that the new and enlarged Sartoris house is used to illustrate the ambitious aims of Colonel John Sartoris. According to this critic, Sartoris tries to "re-establish, in the aftermath of war, the aristocratic order. The unbroken claim of power of the aristocratic dynasty is signaled visibly not only by the size but also by the design of the new Sartoris house. Adding a portico and columns to his new house, the Colonel underlines the aristocratic appeal of his new home" (1992, p.127). To be more specific, this Greek Revival house merely reflects Colonel Sartoris' aristocratic pretensions. Though they pretend to be of noble origins, many a Sartoris male is in fact just a scoundrel and criminal.

Colonel John Sartoris, for instance, not was not only demoted from rank of colonel by his men, but he also worked against Reconstructionists, murdered two innocent people [see page 80] and initiated the Ku Klux Klan in Yoknapatawpha County. Taken together, all these incidents do hardly distinguish a noble person; they are the exploits of a morally dubious. Nevertheless, it is remarkable in which way the Yoknapatawphians pay tribute to a man who is in fact also a criminal.

In *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner deals with similar thematic concerns as previously exemplified in *Flags in the Dust* and he uses the decaying Compson house as a symbol for the decline of the once most important family in whole of Jefferson. Significantly, this "paintless house with its rotting portico" (SF, p.185) is a token of Jefferson's past and, after Benjy burned himself with the house in 1933, its vacant grounds give way to Jefferson's urban future. Originally, the house was located on the Compson Mile, which Jason Lycurgus Compson got from Indian chief Ikkemotubbe – for the price of just a single racehorse:

> […] and in the next year it was Ikkemotubbe who owned the little mare and Compson owned the solid square mile of land which someday would be almost in the center of the town of Jefferson, forested then and still forested twenty years later though rather a park than a forest by that time, with its slavequarters and stables and kitchengardens and the formal lawns and promenades and pavilions laid out by the same architect who built the columned porticoed house furnished by steam-boat from France and New Orleans, […] (SF, pp.205, 206).

After the Civil War, the Compson place was mortgaged and sold in fragments in order to pay for Caddy's wedding and Quentin's year at Harvard. In 1943, Flem Snopes eventually buys from Jason IV what little was left of the Compson place,

> The tale was they had sold a good part of it off back in 1909 for the municipal golf course in order to send the oldest son, Quentin, to Harvard, where he committed suicide at the end of his freshman year; and about ten years ago the youngest son, Benjy, the idiot, had set himself and the house both on fire and burned up in it. […] Snopes's title to the entire old Compson place stood, so that even Jason gave up at last; and that same week the same Wat Snopes who had transformed the old De Spain house into Flem's antebellum mansion twenty years ago, came in again and converted the Compson carriage house (it was detached from the main house so Benjy failed to burn it) into a small two-storey residence, […] (MAN pp.965, 970).

Due to the constant growth of Jefferson's population after WWII, living space was urgently needed. And this is why the Compson Mile was finally turned into a kind of suburban nightmare: "[…] when Charles reached home in September of '45, Jason's old lost patrimony was already being chopped up into subdivision of standardised Veteran's Housing matchboxes; […]" (MAN, p.974). As Kerr notes about this change from splendid mansion to monotonous rows of standardized bungalows: "The stages through which the Compson place passed from the days of its reputed glory to the days of its decrepitude, when it is a setting in the fiction, reflect changes in the history and physical appearance of Jefferson" (1969, p.40). In *Requiem for a Nun*, Faulkner again shows how the decline of the old families and the destruction of their houses change the structure of Jefferson completely:

> […] because there were new people in the town now, strangers, outlanders, living in new minute glass-walled houses set as near and orderly and antiseptic as cribs in a nursery ward, in new subdivisions named Fairfield or Halcyon Acres which had once been the lawn or back yard or kitchen garden of the old residences […] (RFN, p.215).

In *Absalom, Absalom!*, Faulkner likewise parallels the decline of a once wealthy family with the decay and destruction of their great plantation house. To placate himself for being rejected at the front door of a big house by a Negro when he was a boy, Sutpen builds the largest edifice ever seen in Yoknapatawpha County: "So he and the twenty negroes worked together, plastered over with mud against the mosquitoes […] until the day after the house was completed save for the windowglass and the ironware which they could not make by hand. It took him two years […]" (AA, p.28). Certainly, a true aristocrat would hardly build a home with his very own hands. Sutpen, as mentioned above, is barely a planter.

Like Jason Lycurgus Compson, Sutpen also got his land from Ikkemotubbe [though it is not known how he actually got it] (AA, p.33). Created by a French architect, the "largest edifice in the county" (AA, p.30) looked "like a wing of Versailles" (RFN, p.35) and "surrounded by its formal gardens, its slave quarters and stables and smokehouses", it represented Sutpen's "dream of grim and castlelike magnificence" (AA, p.29). This plantation comprised "hundred square miles of some of the best virgin bottom land in the country" (AA, p.26).

But after the Civil War, Sutpen's house is seized by decay because he no longer has slaves nor money to keep it up. Quentin describes Sutpen's Greek Revival plantation house as follows:

> […] the rotting shell with its sagging portico and scaling walls, its sagging blinds and blank-shuttered windows, set in the middle of the domain which had reverted to the state and had been bought and sold bought and sold again and again and again. […] coming up from the rear, into the old street of the slave quarters – a jungle of sumach and persimmon and briers and honeysuckle, and the rotting piles of what had once been log walls and stone chimneys and shingle roofs among the undergrowth […] (AA, p.173).

The decaying house not only parallels Sutpen's economic condition, it also mirrors his tragic familial situation: Sutpen's wife Ellen died in 1863, two years later his son Henry shot the would-be husband of his daughter, Judith. Thereafter, Henry was supposed to have fled to Texas or California, and Thomas and Judith Sutpen spend their remaining years alone in the dark house. And during all these years, Sutpen was dreaming of restoring the house and its environs. This is why he ran a country store with some "delusions of making money out of the store to rebuild the plantation" (AA, p.147) – an aim that he could never accomplish.

Yet Sutpen's house is at the same time also a metaphor for the rise and fall of the plantation South as a whole. Since he has founded his house on the system of slavery, Sutpen [like Sartoris] made the same mistake as the entire South which "was now paying the price for having erected its economic edifice not on the rock of stern morality but on the shifting sands of opportunism and moral brigandage" (AA, p.209). While he was carrying out his design, Sutpen – like the antebellum plantation society of the Old South – has never questioned the ethical and moral principles of the slave system and ignored its inhumanity. Three decades after Sutpen's violent death by the hands of Wash Jones in 1869, Clytie, Sutpen's mulatto daughter, sets the decaying house on fire [see chapter 6.3.3].

It is important to note that every single character of this novel perceives this big house completely differently. For Quentin, who is obsessed with the past, the Sutpen house clearly represents the past and therefore the South's guilt of having enslaved another human race. Miss Rosa, on the other hand, considers Sutpen's

Hundred as a house haunted by the "demon" Sutpen whom she holds responsible for the downfall of her family. For Sutpen himself, this house is just a necessary prerequisite to carry out his grand design of founding a dynasty. Charles Bon, the rejected one-sixteenth Negro son of Sutpen, equates the act of entering Sutpen's house with the fact of getting acknowledged by his father. The house is thus the symbol of his search for his father. As the heir to Sutpen's estate, Henry Sutpen considers this place as his home and shelter where he can hide after he committed fratricide. For Judith Coldfield, the house symbolizes spinsterhood and solitude.

Gutting, by contrast, perceives Sutpen's big house as spatial extension of Thomas Sutpen. Since Sutpen's "presence alone compelled that house to accept and retain human life, as though houses actually possess a sentience, a personality and character acquired" (AA, p.67), Faulkner "formulates the idea of the house as a part of character delineation, and as a spatial object absorbing traits of its owner" (Gutting 1992, p.137).

Yet in the same way as *Absalom, Absalom!* deals with the "crime of the white's rejection of the Negro as an equal human being and its punishment" (Volpe 2001, p.230), so does *Go Down, Moses* likewise explore the racial situation of the Old South. Here, it is particularly Ike McCaslin who considers the property situation of the white upper class as an injustice against the black population. As a result, he repudiates his heritage, the McCaslin plantation. Yet many years prior to Ike's decision, his father Buck and his uncle Buddy already let their slaves have the still unfinished plantation house as a compensation for all that Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin had done to them. Since then, the twin brothers have been dwelling in a log cabin in the vicinity of the big house:

> […] the two brothers who as soon as their father was buried moved out of the tremendously-conceived, the almost barn-like edifice which he had not even completed, into a one-room log cabin which the two of them built themselves and added other rooms to while they lived in it, refusing to allow any slave to touch any timber of it other than the actual raising into place the logs which two men alone could not handle, and domiciled all the slaves in the big house some of the windows of which were still merely boarded up with odds and ends of plank or with the skins of bear and deer nailed over the empty frames: […] (GDM, pp.250, 251).

By renouncing their father's heritage, the twin-brothers attempt to expiate their ancestor's crimes [like, for instance, holding slaves and having an incestuous relationship with his black daughter]. Many years later, Ike's decision to repudiate the farm as well alienates him from his acquisitive wife. She rejects him for this and refuses to sleep with him. As a consequence, Ike will never have a successor and the McCaslin dynasty will end along with him.

Originally, the McCaslin house was just a frontier house, a two-room dogtrot cabin build by Old McCaslin, which was enlarged by Cass Edmonds until he finally saw it fit: "the two log wings which Carothers McCaslin had built […], connected by the open hallway which, […], old Cass Edmonds had enclosed and superposed with a second storey of white clapboards and faced with a portico" (GDM, p.44). Adding a second storey and a portico to the dogtrot cabin, Edmond not only enlarges this building but he also underlines his position among the well-to-do planters in Yoknapatawpha [see also chapter 6.2.1]. In giving his house a white covering, Edmonds metaphorically washes away the sins his forefathers did.

Compared to the plantation houses presented above, the McCaslin-Edmonds plantation contrasts strongly with the Greek Revival houses of the Compsons, Sartorises, and Sutpens. As Gutting notes in this context, "In its simplicity, the McCaslin place makes transparent the frontier life of which the antebellum plantations of north Mississippi gave spatial testimony. […] [Thus, it] is designed to reflect historical reality" (1992, pp.151, 152).

The next important house to be analyzed in this chapter is the home of the anti-plantation family Burden in *Light in August*. Interestingly, the first thing the reader learns about this old colonial plantation house is that the building is afire:

> Two miles away the [Burden] house is still burning, the yellow smoke standing straight as a monument on the horizon. They saw it before noon, when the smoke first rose above the trees, […]. "It's a big fire," another said. "What can it be? I don't remember anything out that way big enough to make all that smoke except that Burden house."
> "Maybe that's what it is," another said. "My pappy says he can remember how fifty years ago folks said it ought to be burned, and with a little human fat meat to start it good."
> "Maybe your pappy slipped out there and set it afire," a third said. They laughed (LIA, p.49).

As the harsh words of these men already indicate, the Burden family was not respected in Yoknapatawpha County at all when they moved from New England to Jefferson during Reconstruction. As Northerners, the Burden family was in favor of the Negro rights movement – an attitude of mind that set them in a stark contrast to the Jefferson society. As a result of that, two Burdens were killed by Colonel John Sartoris when they tried to support black candidates in the first election in Jefferson after the Civil War [see also UNV, pp.205, 206]. Moreover, the Burdens had to hide the graves of their deceased family members to prevent these graves from getting desecrated, as Joanna Burden reveals to Christmas:

> She told Christmas about the graves – the brother's, the grandfather's, the father's and his two wives – on a cedar knoll in the pasture a half mile from the house; listening quietly, Christmas thought, 'Ah. She'll take me to see them. I will have to go.' But she did not. She never mentioned the graves to him again after that night when she told him where they were and that he could go and see them for himself if he wished. "You probably can't find them, anyway," she said. "Because when they brought grandfather and Calvin home that evening, father waited until dark and buried them and hid the graves, levelled the mounds and put brush and things over them.'
> "Hid them?" Christmas said.
> There was nothing soft, feminine, mournful and retrospective in her voice. "So they would not find them. Dig them up. Maybe butcher them." She went on, her voice a little impatient, explanatory: "They hated us here. We were Yankees. Foreigners. Worse than foreigners: enemies. Carpet baggers. And it – the War – still too close for even the ones that got whipped to be very sensible. Stirring up the negroes to murder and rape, they called it. Threatening white supremacy. So I suppose that Colonel Sartoris was a town hero because he killed with two shots from the same pistol an old onearmed man and a boy who had never even cast his first vote […]" (LIA, pp.248, 249).

Even half a century after the end of the Civil War, Joanna Burden is still not an accepted member of the Jefferson community. This is why she has been living the life of a recluse and spinster on her farm which is set two miles away from the town of Jefferson. The mere location of Miss Burden's "old colonial plantation" (LIA, p.36) [it is surrounded by a black neighborhood] makes evident that it is a place of an outsider. For Gutting, the Burden home can be seen "as an individual, secluded space within the larger space of the fictional community" (1992, p.116).

In Faulkner's rendering of this house, "It was a big house set in a grove of trees; obviously a place of some pretensions at one time. But now the trees needed pruning and the house had not been painted in years" (LIA, p.226), the reader immediately senses that this old house is past its prime – just like its inhabitant and owner, Miss Burden. Here, Faulkner once again parallels the exterior of a house with the appearance of that character who is dwelling in it [see also the discussion of Miss Emily and her decayed house in chapter six].

On the first day the novel takes place, a countryman who is coming to town discovers smoke rising up from the Burden house. He rushes to the house and discovers a drunken man [Brown] and the dead body of Joanna Burden in an upstairs room. Joanna Burden is dead from her throat being cut, and it seems that the fire was set just to cover up the murder. Although the villagers are quite upset about the murder of Joanna Burden, it is important to note that it is not the murder of Miss Burden itself that upsets them, but, instead, the very fact that a man supposed to have Negro blood has killed her [Joe Christmas]. Yet Joe's killing of Joanna is actually just an act of self-defense. When Joanna attempts to convert Joe to her Christian beliefs, and Joe refuses to pray or to go to a college for blacks [in order to become a lawyer], she tries to shoot him, but her pistol misfires. Before she has a chance to shoot at him again, Joe cuts her throat. Like Sutpen's Hundred and the big Compson house, the Burden home is another plantation house in Yoknapatawpha County that gets consumed by a fire. Unlike the other legendary plantation houses presented in this chapter, which serve as reminders of the agricultural aristocracy of Jefferson, the Burden place, by contrast, is actually a Northern enclave in Yoknapatawpha County – thus it serves purposes similar to the Unionist's cabin in "Mountain Victory", which demarcates a Northern enclave within a state of the former Confederacy [see chapter 6.1.4].

In *Light in August*, Faulkner uses the opposing principles cabin and big plantation house as a means to highlight the imbalance of power between Joanna Burden [master] and Joe Christmas [servant]. Living in her old colonial house, the matriarch Miss Burden tells Joe explicitly what she desires and what he has to do. And Joe, living in a tumble down Negro cabin set some distance away from Miss Burden's house, proves himself indeed to be a willful slave to her explicit desires.

Since the cabin is an emblem of black life and culture, Joanna is particularly fond of having Christmas dwelling there. Thus she is more able to see in him a man who has mixed blood. This aspect and the fact that Joe is unsure about his racial origins intensify her pleasure in having a sexual relationship with Joe – because she considers this sexual liaison as a violation of the existing symbolic order: "She would be wild then, in the close, breathing halfdark without walls, with her wild hair, each strand of which would seem to come alive like octopus tentacles, and her wild hands and her breathing: 'Negro! Negro! Negro!'" (LIA, p.260).

It strikes that Faulkner recurrently uses the binary oppositions big house and cabin in his writings as a means to intensify the conflict between a poor and a rich character [who sometimes had a fruitful relationship]. This variant to render class struggle and class differences is especially apparent in the novels *Light in August, Absalom, Absalom!,* yet this pattern is also traceable in *If I forget thee, Jerusalem* and "Barn Burning" [see also chapter 6.1.4]. If these characters cannot overcome their differences, their relationships will turn into hatred and end in murder. Yet it is important to note that it is principally the subordinate character who takes deadly revenge against the dominating character: Joe's killing of Joanna Burden is echoed in the violent death of Sutpen by the hands of Wash Jones. Furthermore, the patriarch Sutpen dies in front of Wash Jones's cabin whereas the matriarch Miss Burden is killed within her big house. Whereas Faulkner's male plantation owners rather die outside their big houses [Sutpen, Sartoris], the only woman running a plantation in his all of his writings dies inside her house. This shows that inner and outer spaces in Faulkner's writings are highly gendered concepts.

The last plantation to be analyzed in this discussion is the Harriss estate as rendered in "Knight's Gambit", the concluding volume of the self-entitled short story collection. Located in the Northern sector of Yoknapatawpha County,

> […] [the Harriss place is] six miles from town on what twenty years ago had been just another plantation raising cotton for the market and corn and hay to feed the mules which made the cotton. But now it was a county […] landmark: a mile square of white panel and rail paddock- and pasture-fences and electric-lit stables and a once-simple country house transmogrified now into something a little smaller than a Before-the-War Hollywood set (KG, p.135).

In this short story, district attorney Stevens has to deal with the "domestic entanglement or impasses or embroilments of a family a household […] whose four members or at least inhabitants not a dozen people in the country knew more than merely to speak to on the street" (KG, p.142). Though the Harriss estate is of rather minor relevance in the Yoknapatawpha saga, it is nevertheless an important setting to highlight changes in the plantation economy of Yoknapatawpha County.

In the old days, this plantation was "not so big in acreage but of good land properly cared for and worked, with the house on it which was not large either but was just a house, a domicile, more spartan than comfortable" (KG, p.143). After the plantations owner's death, a humble character who liked to drink toddy and to read Latin books, his sinister son-in-law (a successful New Orleans underworld character) converts this place to horse farm with a splendid mansion at its center,

> He (Harriss) rebuilt the house. […] That is, the new house was going to occupy the same ground the old one would have covered if there had been four of them just alike nailed together. It had been just a house, of one storey, with the gallery across the front where the old master would sit in his home-made chair with his toddy and his Catallus; when Harris got through with it, it looked like the Southern mansion in the moving pictures, only about four times as big and ten times as Southern (KG, p.155).

The imported and faked Tidewater splendor is supposed to cover the fact that the house was built with dirty money. In the end, Mr. Harriss' attempt to demonstrate his success and respectability fails since not even his own wife can perceive this "monstrous home" as her new house through which she walks like a death-in-life character. As Charles Mallison realizes, "it was not she [Mrs. Harriss] who was the ghost; the wraith was Harriss' monstrous house: one breath one faint waft of sachet […], and all the vast soar of walls, the loom and sweep of porticoes, became at once transparent and substanceless" (KG, p.162). Like the old Frenchman's place in *Sanctuary*, here is another plantation that came into the hands of a bootlegger. And, once again, Faulkner contrasts the downfall of the old plantation economy with the rise of terror and chaos in the modern world in his fictional county. However, after her husband's ominous death, Miss Melisandre Backus Harriss marries district attorney Gavin Stevens [a rather unhappy marriage].

Faulkner retells these incidents in *The Mansion*, published ten years after the publication of *Knight's Gambit* in 1949. In the novel, by contrast, Faulkner compares Harriss' transmogrification of the small house into a splendid mansion with the changing exterior of the de Spain mansion as commissioned by Snopes:

> […] the old, once-small and –simple frame house which old Mr. Backus with his Horace and Catallus and his weak whiskey-and-water would not recognise now save by its topographical location, transmogrified by the New Orleans gangster's money as old Snopes had tried to do to the De Spain house with his Yoknapatawpha County gangster's money and failed since here the rich and lavish cash had been spent with taste so that you didn't really see it at all but merely felt it, breathed it, like warmth or temperature; with, surrounding it, enclosing it, the sense of the miles of white panel fences marking the combed and curried acres and the electric-lighted and –heated stables and tack rooms and grooms' quarters and the manager's house all in one choral concord in the background darkness (MAN, p.996).

Ratliff's remark makes clear that both of these estates are in the possession of gangsters. This implies that Flem's money is as dirty as the bootlegger's money. On the one hand, Ratliff here refers to the machinations through which Flem got rich and, on the other hand, he likewise criticizes the way Flem directs the former Sartoris bank of which Flem himself is president of [see also chapter 6.2.3].

In the light of this analysis, one can see that big plantation houses are a key symbol in Faulkner used to highlight conflicts and social injustices between the different classes and races. Yet at the same time, these houses also illustrate in which way the legendary plantation founders had to face the consequences of the injustices they had done to their subordinates – as Allister sums up in his article:

> […] Sartoris, Compson, Sutpen, and McCaslin came to northern Mississippi in the early 1800s […]. Their "grand design" was to become a permanent landed aristocracy by acquiring slaves to clear the land and raise cotton, by building tremendous plantation houses, and by beginning dynastic lines. The plantation house […] embodied their design. But as mansions were built and decayed quickly, so did the dynastic dreams (1983, p.90).

Although Allister's observation is essentially correct, there is still more to it. This becomes apparent if one considers what has finally become of these plantations:

| Novel: | Plantation: | Last remaining character(s): |
|---|---|---|
| *Flags in the Dust* | Sartoris Farm (remains intact) | Elnora (Bayard's illegitimate half-sister) (black female) |
| *Absalom, Absalom!* | Sutpen's Hundred (destroyed by fire) | Jim Bond (feeble minded son of Charles Bon) (black male) |
| *Go Down, Moses* | McCaslin Farm (remains intact) | Ike McCaslin (no successor)<br>Farm belongs to the former slaves<br>(black males and females) |
| *The Hamlet*<br>*Sanctuary*<br>*Requiem for a Nun*<br>*The Reivers* | Old Frenchman's Place (destroyed) | Lonnie Grinnup (feeble minded man in the middle thirties, last descendent from the plantation founder Louis Grennier) (white male) |
| *The Sound and the Fury* | Compson plantation (destroyed by fire) | Jason Compson IV (no successor) (white male) |
| *Light in August* | Burden plantation (destroyed by fire) | There is no one mentioned in the text, but Lena Grove gives birth to her child in the Cabin previously inhabited by Joe Christmas |
| *Knight's Gambit*<br>*The Mansion* | Harriss plantation (converted to horse farm) | Melisandre Backus Harriss Stevens (millionaires, later wife of Gavin Stevens) |

As this table indicates, the plantation system of the Old South practically ceased to exist in Yoknapatawpha County after the Civil War. The great plantations were either destroyed by fire or seized by some decay. Only the Sartoris and McCaslin farms remained intact at the turn of the 19$^{th}$ century – but these farms were not inhabited or run by white men any longer. In addition, it is also striking that there are no male white successors available who might inherit a farm and restore it its to former grandeur [except for the feeble minded Lonnie Grinnup who is mentally not able to perform this task].

In view of these facts, it becomes clear that the once legendary plantations no longer exert any influences on the economic and social structure of postbellum Yoknapatawpha County. The vanishing of the once ruling families and their symbolic houses parallels the passing of the slave system and caste society in the New South. In the economic and social structure of the New South, then, the plantation house ceased to be an image of power and authority. Public houses of mercantile enterprises like banks or stores became henceforth the new icons of power, success and wealth in Faulkner's fictional county. In this respect, Yoknapatawpha serves as a mirror image reflecting historical reality in the New South, as shown in Calverton's book *The Liberation of American Literature*:

> The Civil War ended plantation rule. The passing of plantation economics in the South, and the rise of commerce and industry, marked the beginning of a new South, with new economics, and a new ruling class. The new ruling class was the petty bourgeoisie which supplanted the plantation aristocracy. For a number of years after the Civil War, to be sure, no one class was dominant in the South. The plantation owners did not surrender without a struggle, and it was only after several decades when the smoke of that struggle had vanished that the power of the petty bourgeoisie was finally established. Southern life then began to centre itself about cities instead of plantations, until to-day the plantation has practically disappeared as a force in Southern affairs. The city has superseded it. While plantations still remain, their owners have receded steadily in influence and power. In many instances these plantations are not even self-supporting units, but are clung to the old generation as relics of an age of gold which has now given way to an age of steel. The petty bourgeoisie, adapting itself readily to the new way of life which commerce and industry have created in the South, soon seized control of this reins of government, and, aided by the new economic forces at its command, superimposed its ideology upon the changing environment. In every field this petty bourgeoisie, comprising the urban shop-keepers, traders, merchants, and poor whites who aspired to be traders, and the small farmers who dominated in the towns, extended its tentacle of control (1973, p.105).

As Calverton makes clear, the decline of the plantation legend and the rise of the new mercantile South are in fact two sides of the same coin. The once ruling families are gone and the economic power is now in the hands of storeowners and banks [see chapters 6.2.1 and 6.2.3].

Moreover, plantations are no longer purely patriarchic enterprises – on the contrary, at the end of the 19$^{th}$ century the few remaining plantations are in charge of strong females [Miss Backus Harris Stevens, Joanna Burden, Elnora, Dilsey].

In the context of a house based society, the plantation house in Faulkner gives explicit references to the existence of titles of nobility and recurrent family names (e.g. the Sutpens, Sartorises, Compsons and their aristocratic pretensions) (house society principle five) as well as to the fact that houses are used to render social units (house society principle nine).

Further information about the significance of Southern plantations are presented in Hart's article "The Role of the Plantation in Southern Agriculture" and Bower Hilliard's text "The Plantation in Antebellum Southern Agriculture".

### 6.1.2 Mansions

Architecturally, the mansion is usually a two- or three-storied edifice with many windows. Porches on the front and on the back of the mansion provide an escape from the heat inside. Sometimes, Greek pillars support the roof above the main entrance door in order to lay emphasis on the significance of the inhabitants who live within that building [see chapter 3]. Being a very large and expensive house, the mansion represents wealth and property and shows that its owner belongs to the very top of the social pyramid. And, as well as the big plantation house, the mansion represents family dynasties. The mansion is a visible symbol of a family's identity, past, tradition, and permanence. In this respect, the mansion contains, in Henry James's phrase, "the sense of the past". Moreover, the mansion is the cardinal image of an individual's successful ascent to power and prestige.

This becomes particularly observable in the Snopes trilogy. In *The Mansion*, Flem seizes the opportunity to gain Manfred De Spain's ancestral town mansion in Jefferson. Equating property with respectability and propriety, Flem realizes that he needs a stately mansion to substantiate his new position as bank president. Unlike his predecessor Major De Spain, Flem lacks the kind of respectability the townspeople expect from a bank president. Hence he understands that he does not only need the stately de Spain mansion, he also needs to have it transformed into a monumental edifice that highlights his wealth – and thus his trustworthiness,

> The house they would see him walk into ever morning until time to unlock the money tomorrow morning, would have to be the physical symbol of all them generations of respectability and aristocracy that not only would a been too proud to mishandle other folks' money, but couldn't possibly ever needed to (MAN, p.816).

As Ruzicka points out, "As bank vice-president Flem has no need for the trust the townspeople give to someone whose ancestry and lineage they know [e.g. De Spain or Sartoris]. But as bank president he does need that trust; and without a known ancestry, all he can do is emphasize [or exaggerate] its representation" (1987, p.79). As a result, Flem commissions Wat Snopes to rebuild the mansion:

> So during the next nine or ten months anybody that had or could think up the occasion, could pass along the street and watch Wat and his work gang of kinfolks and in-laws tearing off Major de Spain's front gallery and squaring up the back of the house and building and setting up them colyums to reach all the way from the ground up to the second-storey roof, until even when the painting was finished it still wouldn't be as big as Mount Vernon […] (MAN, p.816).

Ruzicka adds that the change from the gallery to columns is a change in the character of the mansion "from quiet leisure to imposing formality" (1987, p.80). Despite the mighty columns added to the mansion, Flem's standing in the public has not changed a bit. His mansion is merely a façade behind which he tries to hide his real character and lack of respectability. In this context, Ratliff contends:

> But it was jest the house that was altered and transmogrified and symbolised: not him. The house he disappeared into about four p.m. ever evening until about eight a.m. tomorrow, might a been the solid aristocratic ancestral symbol of Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr and Astor and Morgan and Harriman and Hill and ever other golden advocate of hard quick-thinking vested interest, but the feller the owners of that custodianed money seen going and coming out of it was the same one they had done got accustomed to for twenty years now: […] (MAN, p.817).

Of course, Ratliff knows what Flem's little game is and this is why he compares Flem to some famous American robber barons of the last century. Unlike the changing exterior of the mansion, its interior remains intact apart from some minor modifications, "all them big rooms furnished like De Spain left them, plus them interior-decorated sweets the Memphis expert learned Eula that being vice-president of a bank he would have to have" (MAN, p.818). It is clear that Flem just needs the façade of his "colonial monstrosity" (p.859) and shows no real interest in the interior design of his house (p.859). Neither does he invite guests into his house, nor does he conduct business there. Instead, Flem prefers to spend his days in the solitude of his mansion.

Although his house, this enormous power structure, surrounds Flem like a shell – it nonetheless fails to protect him. At the end of the novel, Flem's nemesis Mink Snopes sneaks into this house and takes revenge for being sent to jail for thirty-eight years on behalf of his cousin. He kills Flem who seems to have been

waiting, stoically and serenely, to get killed. Flem welcomes his death to set an end to his empty life. Like Jay Gatsby, Flem went from rags to riches just to experience the emptiness of the American dream. Both of them have become very rich through illegal machinations, but they ended up unhappy and solitary until they were murdered within or outside the space of their splendid mansions.

As indicated by the book's title, Flem's mansion is the central symbol used in the concluding novel of the Snopes trilogy. This mansion represents everything that Flem ever aspired to have – particularly having wealth and respectability.

In the context of the *Collected Stories*, the de Spain mansion also occurs in the WWII story "Shall not Perish" [1942]. Here, the author offers an extensive description of the mansion and its surroundings. When the poor Grier family pays a visit to Major de Spain to comfort him for his son has been killed in the war, the young Grier boy is astonished of the grandeur and size of this mansion:

> And we walked beside the iron picket fence long enough to front a cotton patch; we turned into the yard which was bigger than farms I had seen and followed the gravel drive wider and smoother than roads in Frenchman's Bend, on to the house that to me anyway looked bigger than the courthouse, and mounted the steps between the stone columns and crossed the portico that would have held our whole house, galleries and all, and knocked at the door. And then it never mattered whether our shoes were shined at all or not: the whites of the monkey nigger's eyes for just a second when he opened the door for us, the white of his coat for just a second at the end of the hall before it was gone too, his feet not making any noise than a cat's leaving us to find the right door by ourselves, if we could. And we did – the rich man's parlor that any woman in Frenchman's Bend and I reckon in the rest of the county too could have described to the inch but which not even the men who would come to Major de Spain after bank-hours or on Sunday to ask to have a note extended, had ever seen, with a light hanging in the middle of the ceiling the size of our whole washtub full of chopped-up ice and a gold-colored harp that would have blocked our barn door and a mirror that a man on a mule could have seen himself and the mule both in, and a table shaped like a coffin in the middle of the floor with the Confederate flag spread over it and the photograph of Major de Spain's son and the open box with the medal in it and a big blue automatic pistol weighting down the flag, and Major de Spain standing at the end of the table with his hat on […] – an old man, too old you would have said to have had a son just twenty-three; too old anyway to have had that look on his face (CS, pp.106, 107).

This excerpt is a fine example to explain Faulkner's stress of the vertical dimension of a mansion: the enormous size of the house virtually dwarfs the visitor – and makes him feel insignificant. Thus, trying to fathom the magnitude of de Spain's mansion, the young Grier boy compares his farm and stock to the interior design and dimension of the mansion in order to come to terms with its gigantic size. "Shall not Perish" shows a situation that is very similar to Sutpen's plight in *Absalom, Absalom!*. Like Thomas Sutpen, Major de Spain has lost his sole male descendant. Being left without a male progeny in the patriarchal society of Yoknapatawpha County, the de Spain dynasty will end untimely. This is why de Spain says to Mrs. Grier: "'You have a son left. Take what they been advising to me: go back home and pray. Not for the dead one: for the one they have so far left you, that something somewhere, somehow will save him'" (CS, p.107).

Even the legendary parlor has become a mausoleum of the past. The coffin in the center of the room is covered with a Confederate flag signifying the political roots and heritage of the old man. De Spain cannot cope with the modern world any longer after having lost his only son: "'[…] He [his son] had no country: this one I too repudiate. His country and mine was both ravaged and polluted and destroyed eighty years ago, before I was even born'" (CS, p.108). Unlike all the deceased American soldiers in the war in Europe and in the Pacific who died "in the interests of usury, by the folly and rapacity of politicians, [and] for the glory and aggrandisement of organized labor", his own father had "died for an illusion" [the perseverance of the Old South and its order] (CS, p.108).

"Shall not Perish", however, is an inferior piece of art and rather confuses the coherence of the Yoknapatawpha County saga as established in the Snopes trilogy than it helps to connect previous characters and ideas in a single context.

In "Barn Burning" [1938], written seventeen years prior to the publication of *The Mansion*, Faulkner uses the image of a stately mansion in a Snopes context for the first time. Here, Cassius de Spain's mansion of unknown location on the map of Yoknapatawpha County becomes the place where Abner Snopes is last seen before he reappears on Varner's gallery in the first section of *The Hamlet* [see chapter 6.3.4]. Yet in contrast to Flem and his mansion, Abner and his family are poor sharecroppers and, like Wash Jones, they are labeled as "white trash".

Heading for another farm to find work there, the Snopes family travels in a jumbled wagon until they arrive at a "paintless two-room house identical almost with the dozen others it had stopped before" (CS, p.8). Like most of Faulkner's edifices for poor whites and Negroes, this house is just another paintless and shabby construction: "Likely hit ain't fitten for hawgs", as one of Abner's daughter aptly remarks. Sarty is used to such buildings, but when he and his father approach the de Spain mansion, Sarty is confronted with a different world:

> Presently he could see the grove of oaks and cedars and the other flowering trees and shrubs where the house would be, though not the house yet. They walked beside a fence massed with honeysuckle and Cherokee roses and came to a gate swinging open between two brick pillars, and now, beyond a sweep of drive, he saw the house for the first time and at that instant he forgot his father and the terror and despair both, [...]. Because, for all the twelve movings, they had sojourned until now in a poor country, a land of small farms and fields and houses, and he had never seen a house like this before (CS, p.10).

It is important to note that Faulkner offers no description of the house's exterior [except for its whiteness]. Instead, Faulkner stresses the horizontal dimension of the mansion's environs to indicate the magnificence of that house. After having walked along a fenced park, Abner and Sarty have to pass a pillared gate before they come to the drive that leads up to the front of the house. When Sarty sees the house for the first time, he says "*Hits big as a courthouse*" (CS, p.10), thereby establishing a link between the house and his sense of justice and law. Since Sarty knows that his father is a notorious arsonist, he believes that the mansion might be a place of law that will stop Abner from burning any more barns:

> *They are safe from him. People whose lives are a part of this peace and dignity are beyond his touch, he no more to them than a buzzing wasp: capable of stinging for a little moment but that's all; the spell of this peace and dignity rendering even the barns and stable and cribs which belong to it impervious to the puny flames he might contrive.* [...]. *Maybe he will feel it too. Maybe it will even change him now from what maybe he couldn't help but be* (CS, pp.10, 11).

Sarty hopes that the house might change Abner for the good – like the investigator in "The Tall Men" was changed by the influence of the McCallum dogtrot [see

chapter 6.1.4]. Yet Abner, however, is not impressed by the magnificence of the house at all. Quite the contrary, he derogates the significance of the mansion because he knows that it is a marker of class and status: "'Pretty and white, ain't it?' he said. 'That's sweat. Nigger sweat. Maybe it ain't white enough yet to suit him. Maybe he wants to mix some white sweat with it'" (CS, p.12). In this context, Franklin remarks, "[…] Sarty's first impressions of the de Spain house are illusory. While Sarty's sensibility responds to the external beauty of the house, it is Ab who knows that its whiteness rests upon something less than beautiful – 'nigger-sweat'" (1968, p.190) [see also Freywald 1983, p.45].

Sarty's hope that his father will feel the "spell" of the house is shattered as soon as Abner soils the rug with the manure clinging to his shoes, "and now the boy saw the prints of the stiff foot on the doorjamb and saw them appear on the pale rug behind the machinelike deliberation of the foot which seemed to bear [...] twice the weight which the body compassed" (CS, p.11). The soiled rug makes Sarty aware that Ab does not equate the de Spain mansion with justice, truth, and culture. For Abner, the mansion is a symbol of exploitation: "the man that aims to begin to-morrow owning me body and soul for the next eight months" (CS, p.54).

At the end of the story, Abner intends to set fire to de Spain's barn because he has to pay for the soiled rug. Sarty, however, has to decide now whether to stick to his family or to adhere to the social order as represented by the image of the mansion. Since his sense of justice is stronger than his commitment to his father and his family, Sarty rushes to the mansion in order to warn de Spain.

In the context of this story, the de Spain house is expressive of everything that Ab loathes. After the Civil War, Ab was of even lower social status than the members of the black community. The house is thus symbolic of all those forces that oppose Ab's very being [as perceived by him himself]. As Cook asserts: "If Faulkner presents de Spain's house as a desirable symbol of order, it is certainly not the idyllic Eden of a system superior to worldliness, materialism, and violence. All his own predilection for tradition, stability, and peace does not prevent him from exposing in this story some of the unsavory foundations on which they are based" (1976, p.55). However, somewhere in the future, Ab's son Flem will become the new possessor of the de Spain mansion – as stated above.

After the publication of "Barn Burning", Faulkner's interest in his once leading plantation families ceases to exist – with the single exception of the story "My Grandmother Millard and General Bedford Forrest and The Battle of Harrykin Creek" [1942]. This story is not of further relevance in this discussion.

In the short story "Golden Land" [1934/1935], the main character Ira Ewing also owns a big house to express the respectability and the significance of his family, although the incidents portrayed in this story make clear that Ira and his family are far from being a respectable family at all. Set in a "select residential section of Beverly Hills", Ira Ewing's "hundred-thousand-dollar house" (CS, p.702) is the place where he returns to each morning after his nightly binges. He is alienated from his wife and his son, and uses a scandal in which his daughter is involved in as a means to promote his real-estate business [see also chapter 6.3.4].

On the day the story takes place, Ira wakes up in his bedroom and watches through the window beyond which "his eyes could see the view which might be called the monument to almost twenty-five years of industry and desire" (CS, p.701). Ira seems to be tremendously rich and his house gives view to the villas of those whose "names and faces and even voices were glib and familiar in back corners of the United States and of America and of the world where those of Einstein and Rousseau and Esculapius had never sounded" (CS, p.702). The villas of these celebrities are rendered as being "halfhidden in imported olive groves or friezed by the somber spaced columns of cypress like the facades of Eastern temples" (CS, pp.701, 702). Here, Faulkner refers both to the ignorance of the upper class as well as to the artificiality of these villas, which reflect the image of nearby Hollywood as a "false and meretricious Eden" (Ferguson 1991, p.137). In this context, Kohn writes that Faulkner's 'Golden Land', "whose inhabitants are so concerned with wealth and property, is an almost unbelievable rich city where nothing is what it seems to be" (1983, p.81).

Faulkner highlights the corrupting influence of Los Angeles and Hollywood while contrasting Ira Ewing's social climbing with his successive moral decay. Descending from a family that lived in "sodroofed dugouts on the immense desolation" (CS, p.702) of the Nebraska plains, Ira escaped from a "barren and treeless village" (CS, p.702). Ira spent "ten years half tramp half casual laborer" before he

got a foothold in real estate. Now, at forty-eight, he is "owning a business which he had built up unaided and preserved intact through nineteen-twenty-nine; he had given to his children luxuries and advantages which his own father not only could have conceived in fact, but would have condemned completely in theory [...]" (CS, p.703). Ira's first house is a bungalow, which he and his family left after three years in order to move into the mansion. Now, this bungalow is his mother's place of residence – a place from where she cannot get away:

> His mother lived in Glendale; it was the house which he had taken when he married and later bought, in which his son and daughter had been born – a bungalow in a cul-de-sac of pepper trees and flowering shrubs and vines which the Japanese tended, backed into a barren foothill combed and carried into cypress-and-marble cemetery dramatic as a stage set and topped by an electric sign in red bulbs which, in the San Fernando valley fog, glared in broad sourceless ruby as though just beyond the crest lay not heaven but hell (CS, p.711).

In the vicinity of the San Fernando Valley, "bordering Los Angeles to the north" and "containing many of its middle-class suburbs" (Towner and Carothers 2006, p.379), Ira's bungalow faces an environment that virtually foreshadows his moral decay. Set in a cul-de-sac, the bungalow is surrounded by a cemetery and a barren landscape illuminated by a ruby light which is evocative of the fires of hell.

Ira equates a meaningful life with the acquisition of wealth and power. Yet unlike his parents, who lived quite happily in a poor environment, Ira lives rather unhappily in a splendid mansion without having real relationships to the people surrounding him. Like actors in a movie, these characters are paid by him for just being there. His wife and his kids despise him, but they need his money. Ira keeps his mother in his bungalow and pays all her bills. He even pays for a luxurious flat for his mistress where both the doorman and the elevator boy call Ira by name.

When his mother says that she wants to go back to Nebraska, Ira does not take her concern seriously. She cannot adapt to this place and wants to get away from a town that is erected upon "the medium of cinema" (Towner and Carothers 2006, p.382). For Ira's mother, this place is devoid of any substance. After Ira left her behind, she sits in a chair taken from her home in Nebraska: "[...] the first chair which the older Ira Ewing had bought for her after he built a house and in

which she had rocked the younger Ira to sleep before he could walk, while the older Ira himself sat in the chair which he had made out of a flour barrel, grim, quite and incorruptible" (CS, p.724). This chair is symbolic of what was good in her life and what she is lacking now. She knows that she will never be able to escape from the house and this chair remains her sole reminder of better days.

Obviously, this story reflects Faulkner's own dislike of Hollywood as he had experienced the place while he was working there as a scriptwriter. As Kawin remarks, "it appears that Los Angeles struck him [Faulkner] […] [as] as an imitation world without foundation, indifferent not just to the old truths but to truth itself". Furthermore, this critic adds: "The place is ungrounded physically and morally. It's so corrupt that if it were a barn full of rats, Ira's father would burn it down to clean it out" (1990, pp.199-200, 201).

Interestingly, the story's narrator likewise describes Los Angeles as a place without foundation and basement – causing thus its physical and moral decay:

> […] the car ran powerful, smooth, and fast beneath him, performing its afternoon's jaunt over the incredible distances of which the city was composed; from time to time, had he looked, he could have seen the city in the bright soft vague hazy sunlight, random, scattered about the arid earth like so many gay scraps of paper blown without order, with its curious air of being rootless – of houses bright beautiful and gay, without basements or foundations, lightly attached to a few inches of light penetrable earth, lighter even than dust and laid lightly in turn upon the profound and primeval lava, which one good hard rain would wash forever from the sight and memory of man as a fire-hose flushes down a gutter (CS, pp.718, 719).

Here, the narrator uses the image of ungrounded houses as a metaphor for their inhabitants who also remain ungrounded within a certain type of social foundation and who are hence unable to establish fruitful human relationships. In his analysis of "Golden Land", Kohn asks: "How long do houses 'without basements or foundations' last?" And, according to this critic, the answer is that "such structures are ultimately no better than the people who build, sell, or live in them, as Ira knows very well personally and professionally. […] Faulkner [thus] indicts a society that has lost all sense of where it came from" (1983, pp.84, 85).

In “Golden Land”, the image of the mansion is used to convey the success and wealth of Ira Ewing. All the while, the house remains a façade that covers the deterioration of the Ewing family. Ira’s house conveys nothing save its value of a hundred thousand dollars. It is not invested with the history of its people whereas the mansions in Yoknapatawpha are important landmarks of those prominent leaders who established and shaped the county. Ira, like Flem Snopes, is neither a respectable character nor is his house a real home. Instead, he is just a sham.

Another mansion in the Yoknapatawpha canon is the Greek Revival house of Miss Habersham as rendered in *Intruder in the Dust*. This house once was the seat of one founder of Jefferson, Doctor Habersham. For more information about this “columned colonial house on the edge of town which had not been painted since [Doctor Habersham] died and [which] had neither water nor electricity in it” (ITD, p.76), consult Gutting’s *Yoknapatawpha* (1992, pp.108, 109). Likewise, Gutting’s study also extensively deals with the English manor style home of Horace and Narcissa Benbow as portrayed in *Sanctuary* (1992, pp.109-112).

After the Civil War and the following break up of the Jefferson’s plantation elite, the mansion became the dominant image of social identity and respectability in Yoknapatawpha County [and beyond]. Guttman’s dictum that the house is the “visible symbol of tradition, of permanence, of man’s mastery of the primary environment, of civilization” (1967, pp.49, 50; 1962, p.5) is an apt description of the function of the mansion as used in the Yoknapatawpha context. Therefore, the image of the mansion defines who stands at the very top of the social ladder. On the other hand, it strikes that hardly a character in Faulkner’s fictional world refers to big houses as a mansion – instead, they are mainly referred to as big houses!

In addition, the mansion is expressive of several categories characteristic of a house-based society. For one thing, mansions [like plantation houses] are key symbolic elements in the Jefferson community (house society principle three). Since mansions are representative of the families dwelling in them, so they are also representative of titles of nobility and recurrent family names [e.g. Mayor de Spain and Doctor Habersham’s houses]. Due to the fact that these edifices will be passed on the principle of primogeniture, they are also expressive of the patriarchal order of the Old South.

### 6.1.3 Town Houses

In Faulkner's domain of Yoknapatawpha County, middle class houses are mostly rendered as two-storied town houses – located either in Jefferson or neighboring cities as, for example, Mottstown. In a number of short stories written between 1928 and 1932, Faulkner uses the image of town houses as a metaphor for trapped characters. Some of these characters live apart from the community and their houses are virtually prisons in which they are kept by overbearing parent figures, husbands, or even through their own choice.

In "Miss Zilphia Gant" [1928], a town house [a dressmaker's shop] set in Jefferson is used to convey the title character's confinement and isolation. Kept by her mother within the confines of a prison-like house, Miss Zilphia has been living in a "barred room" (US, p.371) for twenty-three years without having established any real contact with the Jefferson community: "They told in the town how she [Mrs. Gant] and her daughter, Zilphia, lived in a single room twelve feet square for twenty-three years. It was partitioned off from the rear of the shop and it contained a bed, a table, two chairs and an oil stove" (US, p.371). Raised by a paranoid mother with a male appearance and male behavior [thus representing the Law of the Father], Zilphia is forced to grow up in a state of perfect isolation. As Díaz-Diocaretz remarks in this context, "The place of habitation becomes part of the confinement suffered by Zilphia, who has no other diversion except what her mother allows" (1985, p.242).

Keeping her daughter away from school and town life, Mrs. Gant forces Zilphia to develop into the very same recluse she herself has become. Since her ex-husband has left her for somebody else, Mrs. Gant's emotional instability has turned into murderous hatred and she killed both her spouse and his mistress in cold blood. And due to Mrs. Gant's loathing of the male sex, she prefers to incarcerate her daughter in her house than to let her have any experiences with the opposite sex for Zilphia's "freedom is her mother's constant threat and obsession" (Díaz-Diocaretz 1985, p.242). Yet after a while, Mrs. Gant sees that Zilphia needs to have contact with children and she allows her to go to school and to visit classmates:

> The next day she gave Zilphia permission to visit one of them. Zilphia would go home with the girl from school on certain days and they played in the barn, or in bad weather, in the house. At a certain hour Mrs. Gant appeared at the gate in a black shawl and bonnet and she and Zilphia returned to the barred room above the lot. And each afternoon […] Mrs. Gant sat on a wooden box from the time school was out until the time for Zilphia to start home, when she would hide the box again and go around by the next street to the gate and be waiting there when Zilphia emerged from the house (US, p.373).

Mistrusting her daughter, Mrs. Gant watches her daughter minutely when she is outside her barred room and to which she has to go back to. In this room, Zilphia becomes her mother's doppelganger: "they lived now in a kind of armistice. They slept in the same bed and ate of the same food for days in complete silence" (US, p.374). Yet Zilphia's situation changes abruptly when a painter, who works outside of Mrs. Gant's house, feels attracted to her. A few days later, they get married in secret, but their marriage is never consummated. Zilphia is too afraid to tell her mother about him – although she seems to know what has been going on:

> It was full twilight when they entered the gate and went up the walk. […] They looked toward the house. Mrs. Gant, dressed, in the black shawl and bonnet, stood in the door with the shotgun. […] "Go in the house," Mrs. Gant said, without turning her head. Zilphia went on. "Go on," Mrs. Gant said. "Shut the door." Zilphia entered and turned, beginning to close the door. […] "Shut it," Mrs. Gant said. Zilphia shut the door carefully, fumbling a little at the knob. The house was still; in the cramped hall the shadows of the twilight loomed like a herd of motionless elephants. She could hear her heart faintly, but no other sound, no sound from beyond the door which she had closed upon her husband's face. She never saw it again (US, pp.377-378).

Too weak to rebel against her mother, Zilphia is locked up once more in the imprisoning space of her room while her husband leaves the town. Yet three days after this incident, Mrs. Gant dies while sitting on the porch, "the shotgun on her lap like an artificial penis" (Roberts 1991, p.161). Although free to go, Zilphia still does not leave the house and waits there vainly for her husband to come back.

During the years that follow, Zilphia decays and develops into a death-in-life character. Like Miss Emily, Zilphia grows plumper and gets "a flabby plumpness in the wrong places. Her eyes behind the shell-rimmed glasses were a muddy

olive, faintly protuberant. Her partner said that she was not hygienically over-fastidious" (US, p.379). After Zilphia commissions a private eye to find out about her ex-husband's whereabouts, she receives a letter informing her that he had been killed by a motorcar. Moreover, Zilphia also learns that his wife died while giving birth to a daughter. On the very next day, Zilphia is said to have left the town.

After being absent for three years, Miss Zilphia returns to Jefferson "in mourning, with a plain gold band and a child. [...] Zilphia told quietly of her second marriage and her husband's death, and after a time the [town's] interest died away" (US, p.381). The child is, of course, the adopted daughter of her deceased ex-husband, and it will be subjected to the same kind of confinement and isolation that Zilphia herself experienced when she was a child. In an imitation of her own mother's misbehavior, Zilphia likewise keeps her daughter within a barred room: "She opened the house again, but she also fixed a day nursery in the room behind the shop. The window was barred, so she need not worry about the child. 'It's a nice pleasant room,' she said. 'Why, I grew up there, myself'"(US, p.381). In the final lines of the story, Zilphia is shown walking with her daughter "to and from school with little Zilphia's hand in hers" (US, p.381) just like Zilphia herself had been escorted by her own mother when she was still a child. Zilphia has now turned into a perfect mirror image of her mother. As a result, Little Zilphia will become what Morell calls a "prisoner of the inner world" (1975, p.299). Polk, however, also takes notice of Zilphia's imitation of her mother's doings: "[...] [in] repeating her own life, [Zilphia] becomes her own mother and begins to raise her little girl as she had been raised, in a house with barred windows" (1998, p.78). Thus, the story comes full circle. Díaz-Diocaretz also considers this aspect in her article "Women as Bounded Text" and she notes:

> The final image of the story is not only an echo of a replay, but a parody of Zilphia's own childhood and the anticipation of little Zilphia's life. That is, fated repetition that must ground every descendant of a woman who has not complied with social expectations. As mother and daughter are on their way to school, we witness the Faulknerian determinism territorialized on women at its best. The program of duplication of the mother's life - without a man - perpetuating her fate points to the doom and the strong conditioning of women's lives (1985, p.244).

Although the house is the central symbol in “Miss Zilphia Gant”, Faulkner’s treatment of this image is rather awkward. For instance, his depiction of the barred room as a metaphor for the mother’s womb to which Miss Zilphia and little Zilphia return to and where they will be kept for good is less convincingly rendered. In “The Brooch” [1930], Faulkner employs house imagery to render a character’s regressus ad uterum for a second time, as will be seen in this analysis.

Despite its weaknesses, however, “Miss Zilphia Gant” succeeds as a presentation of a female character trapped within the confines of a town house. In “Elly”, written shortly after “Miss Zilphia Gant”, Faulkner offers another variation of this motif. In this story, the eighteen-year-old protagonist is trapped in the “dark house” (CS, pp. 208, 216) of her parents and her deaf grandmother. Elly is a “flapper” typical of the early twenties, and she is clearly fed up with small town life, “[…] Elly passed the monotonous round of her days in a kind of dull peace. […] ‘What else can I do, in this little dead, hopeless town?’ ” (CS, p.212).

Trying to kill the emptiness in her life, Elly lies almost every night with just about any man in the shadow of her screened veranda [see also chapter 6.3.4], thus all the while defying her grandmother. As Skei remarks, Elly’s house “is isolated, dark, and withdrawn from the outside world, and Elly feels trapped in it – a feeling that is strengthened by her grandmother’s vigilance” (1979, p.18).

In addition to that, the void in Elly’s life is paralleled in the empty house through which she walks pointlessly, “[…] Elly seemed to herself to move quietly and aimlessly, in a hiatus without thought or sense, from empty room to empty room” (CS, p.214). Yet for Elly, the emptiness inside her house becomes all the more apparent as soon as her grandmother, Elly’s antagonist in this story, leaves the house in order to visit kin in Mills City: “Her going seemed to leave the house bigger and emptier than it had ever been, as if the grandmother had been the only other actually living person in it” (CS, p.214). As Freywald points out, “Sinn entsteht also für das Leben des ‘flappers’ nur in der Auseinandersetzung, im ständigen Sich-Recht-fertigen-Müssen, im feindlichen Gegenüber eines Gegners” (1983, p.74). By contrast, the room of Elly’s cousin in the house in Mills City, which Elly occupies in the night of her final argument with her grandmother, is described in detail: “The grandmother sat in a low chair beside the dressing table

littered with the frivolous impedimenta of a young girl … bottles, powder puffs, photographs, a row of dance programs stuck into the mirror frame" (CS, p.217). As long as Elly lives in quiet monotony, the house appears to be empty, but when Elly argues with her grandmother, rooms are filled with objects to indicate Elly's struggle against the emptiness in her life. The house thus mirrors Elly's wish to be filled with life, just like a house needs to be furnished with things.

In "Elly", however, Faulkner not only moves his protagonist from one house to another, but also from one town to another. In this story of movement, the streets that connect these towns are an expression of Elly's wish to escape from her house and thus from the society she is embedded within. It is not surprising that the story reaches its climax on the road leading back to Jefferson, where Elly causes a fatal car-crash that kills every character in the car excepting her herself. Here, a notable difference between "Elly" and "Miss Zilphia Gant" becomes apparent. Whereas Miss Zilphia becomes a mirror image or doppelganger of her own mother, Elly, on the other hand, kills her grandmother in order not to become like her. As Polk notes in his essay "Children of the Dark House",

> Her grandmother, then, is first the very model of what Elly is afraid she herself will eventually become, and Elly is terrified of that. Second, […] her grandmother is Elly's own vengeful superego, that part that disapproves of her, that forces her to hate herself, the very model of the gray-haired punitive Medusa, the controlling genius of the dark house (1998, p.80).

In "A Rose for Emily" [1929], Faulkner's most powerful use of the house motif throughout all of his fiction, the author again uses a town house set in Jefferson as a symbol for female entrapment. In this story, the title character [a gray-haired spinster] lives in a "big squarish frame house […] set on what had once been our most select street" (CS, p.119). Like Miss Emily herself, her neo-Gothic house is past its prime. Once a marker of status, her house has turned into a kind of prison that Miss Emily refuses to leave. In her youth, Miss Emily was not allowed to have contact with the males of the town. Her father, who acted in the same way as Mrs. Gant, kept her away from any possible suitors because he wanted her to remain in his household [the text never says what has happened to Mrs. Grierson].

Mr. Grierson's repression of his daughter finds expression in the way he has barred her from getting away from the house: "We [the Jefferson community] had long thought of them as a tableau, Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horsewhip, the two of them framed by the back-flung front door" (CS, p.123). As this excerpt shows, Mr. Grierson not only drove the males away with his horsewhip, but also barred Emily from getting out of the house. As long as Mr. Grierson was alive, there was no way out. But after his death, when the "house was all that was left to her" (CS, p.123), Miss Emily was able to go out and starts dating Homer Barron, a Yankee day laborer. Yet as soon as Homer has mysteriously disappeared, Miss Emily again quits leaving the house:

> Now and then we would see her at a window for a moment, as the men did that night when they sprinkled the lime, but for almost six months she did not appear on the streets. Then we knew that this was to be expected too; as if that quality of her father which had thwarted her woman's life so many times had been too virulent and too furious to die (CS, p.127).

In her remaining years, Miss Emily still behaves as instructed by her father and stays in her house for good. She ignores modern Jefferson society and stays inside her father's house until her very end. In this mausoleum of hers, then, where time has ceased to exist, she is just another item of the past, "dear, inescapable, impervious, tranquil, and perverse" (CS, p.128). In this context, Roberts contends:

> Her house, with its musty unused rooms and locked doors – a prison and a mausoleum, signifies how she has pretended to conform to the Old South code of chastity, all the while revealing in her deviancy. The house, like Miss Emily's body, is simultaneously a shrine to her father's narrow values, with everything left in its nineteenth-century place, and a denial of Grierson sexual decorum, with the dead lover's corpse enclosed in an inner chamber (1994, p.159).

In her reading of "A Rose for Emily", Freywald also highlights the significance of the house motif, as well. For this critic, house imagery is used as a leitmotif that serves to emphasize Miss Emily's stasis and refusal to change:

> Faulkner hat in keiner anderen Kurzgeschichte das Haus so sehr zum Symbol der Stasis, der absoluten Unbeweglichkeit gemacht wie in “A Rose for Emily“; das Hauptmerkmal dieses Gebäudes ist seine Unzulänglichkeit, nicht nur, weil Emily es schließlich nicht mehr verlässt und den Kontakt zur Außenwelt nur noch durch Tobe aufrechterhält, sondern vor allem, weil es den Bewohnern der Stadt, [...], im wesentlichen nur als Außenansicht zugänglich [...] ist (1983, pp.36, 37).

As Freywald emphasizes, the Grierson house is clearly the central symbol of the story. Nevertheless, symbols are ambiguous in meaning and thus the various interpretations regarding the Grierson house are not contradictory but, instead, different perspectives on the very same issue. In this respect, the Grierson house can be seen as a representation of Emily’s body [Diane Roberts: *Faulkner and Southern Womanhood*], as a comment on the clash between Old South and the New South [Watkins: “The Structure of ‘A Rose for Emily’”, West: “Atmosphere and Theme in Faulkner’s ‘A Rose for Emily’”], or as an image representing male order [Gwinn: *The Feminine and Faulkner: Reading (Beyond) Sexual Difference*].

Nonetheless, this story includes elements that are clearly developments from both “Miss Zilphia Gant” and “Elly”, which show that the image of a middle class house in Faulkner’s short stories is often used as symbol for females who are entrapped by either a parent [or both parents] or by aggressive husbands.

To give further evidence for this assumption, Faulkner uses the trapped female motif once again in “Dry September” [1930]. This short story, which deals with the lynching of an innocent black man who is accused to have raped a white woman [Minnie Cooper], concludes with the lynch mob’s leader [McLendon] returning home to his frightened wife. When he approaches his “neat new house”, which is “trim and fresh as a birdcage and almost as small, with its clean, green-and-white paint” (CS, p.182), he brutalizes his wife for the mere fact that she was waiting for him late in the evening:

> “Look at the clock,” he said, lifting his arm, pointing. She stood before him, her face lowered, a magazine in her hands. Her face was pale, strained, and weary-looking. “Haven’t I told you about sitting up like this, waiting to see when I come in?” […] He caught her shoulder. […] “Didn’t I tell you?” He released her and half struck, half flung her across the chair, and she lay there and watched him quietly as he left the room (CS, p.182).

This birdcage house is a fitting setting for a character who once “commanded troops at the front in France” (CS, p.171) during WWI and who is now no longer of any value for the Jefferson community. As Howard Faulkner notes, McLendon “brought home the physical and ethical stance of war” (1973, p.49). As a result of this, he keeps his wife captive within the little cage of his, while he goes out to defend the honor of an allegedly raped or brutalized white woman.

Minnie Cooper, on the other hand, also lives in a “small frame house with her invalid mother and a thin, sallow, unflagging aunt”. Moreover, Minnie “was of comfortable people – not the best in Jefferson, but good people enough […]” (CS, pp.173, 174) – as reflected in the image of her small house. She spends her idle and empty days out on the porch “to sit swinging in the porch swing until noon” (CS, p.171). Unlike Elly, Minnie has no sexual relationships at all.

In “Dry September”, Faulkner established many similarities between Minnie Cooper and McLendon – many of them linked with their middle class houses. For instance, both of them spend their empty days in small houses, where they remember the moments of glory they had in their past. Whereas Minnie merely imagines she has been raped or brutalized, McLendon actually beats his wife. At the end of the story, both McLendon and Minnie Cooper are shown undressed in their houses, signifying thus their mutual guilt for the murder of Will Mayes:

> They removed the pink voile and the sheer underthings and the stockings, and put her [Minnie] to bed, and cracked ice for her temples, and sent for the doctor. […] He [McLendon] went on through the house, ripping off his shirt, and on the dark, screened porch at the rear he stood and mopped his head and shoulders with the shirt and flung it away. He took the pistol from his hip and laid it on the table beside the bed, and sat on the bed and removed his shoes, and rose, and slipped his trousers off. He was sweating again already, and he stooped and hunted furiously for the shirt. At last he found it and wiped his body again, and, with his body pressed against the dusty screen, he stood panting (CS, pp. 181, 183).

Both Minnie Cooper and McLendon cannot cool down because the heat they feel stems from their very own bad conscience. Knowing that they have caused the death of an innocent black man, the tormenting heat they sense foreshadows the fires of hell for they will be punished for each one’s brief moment of excitement.

In “The Brooch” [1930], “Centaur in Brass” [1931], and “Uncle Willy” [1935], short stories dealing with male protagonists, Faulkner uses middle class houses for very different purposes. “The Brooch”, to begin with, resembles “Miss Zilphia Gant”, “Elly”, and “A Rose for Emily”, in which “parental figures haunt the lives of their children or grandchildren and thwart their emerging sexual needs” (Hult 1978, p.291). In this short story, Faulkner renders Howard Boyd’s inability to leave the decaying house of his mother and he uses a cave-like room as a symbol for Howard’s wish to return to his mother’s womb [as stated above]. In this context, Freywald elaborates on the symbol of the Boyd-house:

> Der Raum - das Haus - als Gefängnis, wie er z.B. in ‘Elly’ zu erfahren war, erfährt in ‘The Brooch’ seine volle Ausformung, der Raum dient hier allerdings in seiner Doppeldeutigkeit (als Zufluchtsort und Gefängnis) als ambivalentes Symbol für die zweischichtige – reale und fiktionale bzw. irreale - Bewusstseinslage des Protagonisten. (1983, p.87).

Like Mrs. Gant, Howard’s mother is another female left by her husband, “He just went away, leaving a note to his wife in which he told her that he could no longer bear to lie in bed at night and watch her rolling onto empty spools the string saved from parcels from the store” (CS, pp.647, 648). As a result, she tries to keep her son within the house in order not to be alone. And Howard indeed submits to his mother’s request. As Volpe states, “onto the empty spool of her own life, Mrs. Boyd wraps her son, isolating him from his playmates, and even following him to Charlottesville when he enters the University of Virginia” (2004, p.158). Although Howard marries a woman, he still refuses to leave his mother’s house, “They lived upstairs, where, a year later, their child was born. They took the child down for Mrs. Boyd [who has become immobile after a heart stroke and is thus tied to her bed] to see it. She turned the head on the pillows and looked at the child once. […] In the next year the child died. Again Amy tried to get him to move” (CS, p.652). Amy’s attempts to make him move are in vain, of course, for Howard cannot leave his mother. For Volpe, the baby’s death symbolizes Howard’s retreat into stasis: “the possibility of a future for him is dead. He will not, cannot, free himself from the suffocating grip of the past” (2004, p.159).

When Howard's mother forces Amy to leave her house because of her affair with another man, Howard neither contradicts his mother nor supports Amy. However, as soon as Amy has gone for good, he goes into an upstairs bathroom, which was "built onto the house later" (CS, p.664), and turns this room into a kind of cave:

> Although it [the bathroom] was detached from the house proper and the whole depth of it from his mother's room, he nevertheless stuffed towels carefully about and beneath the door, and then removed them and returned to the bedroom and took the down coverlet from Amy's bed and returned and stuffed the door again and then hung the coverlet before it (CS, p.664).

Howard thus creates a symbolic womb in which he is going to kill himself – in order to regress to the prenatal state [state before the separation from his mother]: "But he did not hang the coverlet this time. He drew it over himself, squatting, huddling into it, the muzzle of the pistol between his teeth like a pipe, wadding the thick soft coverlet about his head, hurrying, moving swiftly now because he was already beginning to suffocate" (CS, p.665). Neither able to stay nor to leave his mother, Howard commits suicide just to stop his inner conflict. In this context, Hult analyzes the strange nature of Howard's suicide and she remarks,

> The bizarre method of Howard's suicide, then, becomes clear once we have understood his conflicting needs and his failure to reconcile them successfully. Howard still goes to death with these ambivalent needs; he still requires the security, warmth, and peacefulness of the mother-womb (the Riolama), but he also makes the cave out of *Amy's* blanket and places the gun in his *mouth*. Security and sexuality merge. The place of nourishment becomes the place of death, and the 'sexual act,' never possible in real life, must occur before suffocation sets in. Death becomes highly erotic. […] At the same time, the method and the act itself of Howard's suicide is a successful fantasy, as he secures for himself in the anticipation and erotic excitement of death what he was never able to achieve in life (1978, pp.304, 305).

It is important to note that Faulkner sets this symbolic location within the upper part of the house [like the sealed chamber in "A Rose for Emily" or Henry's secret hideout in *Absalom, Absalom!*]. Freywald likewise emphasizes Faulkner's use of the vertical dimension of Howard's house. In this context, she contends that different vertical planes are used as expressions of a character's state of mind:

> So entsprechen unten und oben in der Geschichte Bewusstseinslagen des Helden, so ist der Raum nicht nur akzidentielle Beigabe, sondern Verbildlichung einer existentiellen Gefahren- bzw. Grenzsituation, so entspricht die Bewegung zwischen den Räumen einer elementaren Vitalschwankung des Protagonisten, so bezeichnet das Raumsymbol in seiner gefächerten Vielheit Bewegungstendenzen des Helden, und so sind Haus, Zimmer, und 'Höhle' schließlich bis an die Grenze der Deckungsgleichheit heranreichende Symbole für ein kompliziertes, differenziertes und in sich gespaltenes Existenzmuster (1983, p.91).

For Volpe, on the other hand, Faulkner's use of Freudian symbolism like the cave is "almost embarrassingly blatant and crude" Moreover, "The Freudian superstructure is obtrusive; the analysis of Howard's problems in terms of *Green Mansions* and the return-to-the-womb suicide are gauche" (Volpe 2004, pp.156, 159). Indeed, it is hardly credible that a highly neurotic character driven by his death-wish first reads Hudson's *Green Mansions: A Romance of the Tropical Forest* ["he read only the part about the journey of the three people in search of the Riolama which did not exist […], not knowing then that it was the cave-symbol which he sought, escaping it at last […]" (CS, p.663)], before he creates a replica of a cave where he retreats to die in a bizarre act of suicide.

In "The Brooch", the decaying town house is both a sanctuary as well as a prison. It is therefore both a place of security and warmth as well as an image of confinement and isolation. In "Uncle Willy", Faulkner returns to this issue again, and he uses a town house [a small shop] as a sanctuary for a drug-addicted outsider, Willy Christian, who "lived by himself in a little old neat white house where he had been born" (CS, pp.225, 226). In contrast to this neat white house, Willy Christian himself is of rather darker nature. He takes his drugs in the presence of children who visit him in his dark shop: "And we would eat the ice cream, and then we would watch Uncle Willy light the little alcohol stove and fill the needle and roll his sleeve up over the little blue myriad punctures starting at his elbow and going right on up into his shirt" (CS, p.226). It is hardly surprising that the Jefferson community cannot tolerate Willy's behavior any longer. As a consequence, Willy is dragged out of his sheltering home and sent someplace else in order to get detoxified, "So they shoved him into the car and him looking back at us […] giving us that single look of amazed and desperate despair" (CS, p.229).

Of course, the villagers do not succeed in bettering Willy Christian. Willy always finds ways to counteract the do-gooder's attempt to make him quit dope. Like "Elly", "Uncle Willy" is also a story of movement. When he is no longer able to use his house as a shelter [for the cleaned windows of his shop make it impossible for him to take his morphine injections], he buys a car in order to have fun in Memphis from where he returned with "his clothes smelling of that smell whose source I [the child narrator] was not to discover at first hand for some years yet, and two or three half-empty bottles and a little notebook full of telephone numbers and names like Lorine and Billie and Jack" (CS, p.236). According to Towner and Carothers, these names are evocative of the Memphis underworld (2006, p.126). Nevertheless, all his schemes to fool the do-gooders go awry and the do-gooders send him to the Keeley Institute to get detoxified, once again.

When his nemesis, Mrs. Merridew, eventually becomes his legal guardian, Willy has to leave Jefferson and retreats into the sky: "Uncle Willy told me how he had bought the airplane with some of the money he had sold his house for [...]" (CS, p.241). Although Willy elevates himself from the horizontal to the vertical dimension, he is still not able to get way. At the end of the story, he dies in a plane crash when he tries to fly the aircraft all by himself. In Faulkner, the image of the house always refers to being grounded into a certain society – regardless whether a character is integrated or not. In such aviator stories like *Pylon*, "Honor", and "Death Drag", for instance, Faulkner substitutes the house [stasis] with the aircraft [motion] to emphasize the rootlessness of his characters. Like Elly, Willy Christian is just another uprooted character who exchanges his house for a car and a plane in order to get away from the righteous citizens of his village.

The town house as a sanctuary for a character driven by obsessions is also a recurrent motif *Light in August*. In this novel, the former reverend Hightower has to leave the presbytery for having turned the Jefferson community against him. As a consequence, he retreats into a shabby bungalow barely visible from the outside:

> From his study window he can see the street. It is not far away, since the lawn is not deep. It is a small lawn, containing a half dozen low-growing maples. The house, the brown, unpainted and unobtrusive bungalow is small too and by bushing crepe myrtle and syringa and althea almost hidden save for that gap through which from the study

> window he watches the street. So hidden it is that the light from the corner street scarcely touches it (LIA, p.57).

This bungalow, almost invisible behind concealing bushes and thickets, is an apt metaphor for Hightower's isolation from his former parish. According to Gutting, "the house is the spatial correspondent to the stasis and retreat from the motion of life that characterizes its owner" (1992, p.116). Like Willy Christian and Miss Emily, Hightower himself is just another recluse [see chapter 6.2.5]. Moreover, Faulkner's presentation of a character called Hightower living in a bungalow is highly ironic. Since the very name of this character evokes the impression of a tall character who stands closer to God, his small house, which has no verticality at all, contradicts any higher expectations linked to him. His very name underscores that he is the laughing stock of the town. Seen metaphorically, the image of a high tower signifies the realm of the intellect and idealism (Watson 1989, p.139). This house with no verticality thus metaphorically reflects Hightower's determination to remain blind to his social exclusion and baseless glorification of his granddad.

A middle class bungalow used as a symbol for an outsider from the Jefferson community also occurs in the short story "Centaur in Brass". Here, Flem's gradual ascent to power comes to a standstill after his scheme to steal brass from the Jefferson municipal power plant goes awry. His defeat is rendered in both the small house in which he lives and the barren environs surrounding it:

> In those days Snopes lived in a new little bungalow on the edge of town, and, when shortly after that New Year he resigned from the power plant [where he was superintendent of], as the weather warmed into Spring they would see him quite often in his tiny grassless and treeless side yard. It was a locality of such other hopeless little houses inhabited half by Negroes, and washed clay gullies and ditches filled with scrapped automobiles and tin cans, and the prospect was not pleasing (CS, p.168).

Whereas bushes surround Hightower's bungalow and make it scarcely visible, Flem's yard, set in a shabby place of the town, is a barren place that reflects not only his impotence, but also his failure to climb the social ladder. His small bungalow is just a bleak counterpart to the big mansion he desires to own. In her reading of the concluding section of this short story, Freywald contends:

> Die Schlußszene gewinnt damit nicht nur an Verbindlichkeit und Intensität ihres Bildcharakters, sondern sie grenzt Flem, sein Grundstück und sein Haus auch gegen die Stadt ab, die, selbst von Bäumen umgeben, ein Symbol der Fruchtbarkeit darstellt […], während Flems Hof 'grassless and treeless' ist und so, da es Frühling wird, symbolisch auf Flems eigene Unfruchtbarkeit wie auch auf die Fruchtlosigkeit seines Handelns verweist (1983, p.80).

Yet the sterility of Flem's life is not only mirrored in his barren garden, but also in his "monument of brass" (CS, p.149), the city water tank filled with contaminated water, where Flem has hidden the stolen brass:

> And so they wondered what he could be looking at there, since there was nothing to see above the massed trees which shaded the town itself except the low smudge of the power plant, and the water tank. And it too was condemned now, for the water had suddenly gone bad two years ago and the town now had a new reservoir underground. But the tank was a stout one and the water was still good to wash the streets with, and so the town let it stand, refusing at one time a quite liberal though anonymous offer to purchase and remove it (CS, p.168).

Usually, water is a symbol for life but in this story, Faulkner shows an inversion of this motif and the once life-giving elixir is now a symbol of death and sterility. Like the bungalow, the water tank serves as a constant reminder of Flem's defeat and financial loss. Furthermore, Faulkner concludes this story with an image of stasis. At the end of the story, Flem sits motionless in his yard and watches the water tank [symbol of his failure] filled with stale and stagnant water![symbolic of his sterility], which Faulkner calls a "transient and symbolic liquid that was not even fit to drink, but which, for the very reason of its impermanence, was more enduring through its fluidity and blind renewal than the brass which poisoned it, than columns of basalt or of lead" (CS, 168). Faulkner explicitly emphasizes the connection between Flem and the water in his rendering of the color of Flem's eyes, "His eyes were the color of stagnant water […]" (CS, p.152).

This bungalow gains significance as a spatial metaphor for Flem Snopes if one consults the fifteenth chapter of the novel *The Town*. When Gavin Stevens has a conversation with Eula Snopes in their new home, she tells him that Flem felt a

need to have his house furnished although he did not care about its interior at all. Yet something about the nature of the bungalow's interior makes Gavin wonder:

> […] suddenly I [Gavin] knew where I had seen the [sitting] room and the hallway before. In a photograph, the photograph from say *Town and Country* labeled *American Interieur*, reproduced in color in a wholesale furniture catalogue, with the added legend: *This is neither a Copy nor a Reproduction. It's our own Model scaled to your individual Requirements* (TOW, p.541).

When Gavin notes the artificiality of this room and says that this room does not reflect Eula's style at all, she replies that it was Flem who chose the furniture. In fact, it was not Flem himself who selected the furniture but, instead, a store clerk who knew that Flem wanted something to represent his new status as a bank vice-president whereupon it was offered to Flem that his house will be furnished in a way that underscores his new position in the bank. The mere fact that Flem is not interested in his new home's interior except that it has to meet certain expectations connected with his job indicates the emptiness in Flem's life. This aspect surfaces again in *The Mansion*, when Flem takes residence in the former de Spain mansion and changes its exterior but retains its interior unchanged.

To recapitulate this chapter, the image of middle class houses frequently occurs in Faulkner's fiction written between 1928 and 1932, mostly featuring characters who do not appear again in Faulkner's novels [with the exception of Flem]. The middle class house can symbolize either a prison or a sanctuary:

In stories dealing with female characters, the middle class house is mostly used to convey a prison-like edifice where a character is kept by a jealous parent figure ["Miss Zilphia Gant", "A Rose for Emily"], by the forces of the Jefferson society ["Elly"], or by a dominating husband ["Dry September"].

In short stories featuring male protagonists, on the other hand, the middle class house can be seen as a marker of social standing ["Centaur in Brass"], as an icon of the order of the society ["Uncle Willy"], or as a final refuge for a character driven by an oedipal complex ["The Brooch"]. In the context of a house-based society, the town house is related to principle four since town houses are also used to render social competition [see Flem's investments in his bungalow].

### 6.1.4 Cabins

The vast gulf separating the wealthy planter class from poor blacks and whites [both the landowning yeomen stock and landless sharecroppers] is most clearly represented by the types of houses they live in. Whereas plantation houses and mansions demarcate power, wealth, and authority, cabins, by contrast, are merely symbolic of utter poverty, dependence as well as black life and culture in general. Since Faulkner's stories recurrently deal with the bad living conditions of poor characters, cabin imagery has become a crucial feature of his writings.

In Faulkner's fictional world, cabins are basically located on the outskirts of the town and in some black housing areas like 'Negro's Hollow' in the periphery. To begin with, a typical dwelling for Faulkner's poor characters is the dogtrot cabin. As Hines writes about Faulkner's use of such buildings: "[these cabins] are hard, tough structures, symbolic for Faulkner not only of the meanness of life for some, but of the patience and persistence and endurance of the people who built and used them" (1996, p.24). In his early novels like *Flags in the Dust* and *Absalom, Absalom!*, for instance, Faulkner employs the image of the cabin predominantly to emphasize the bad social and economic conditions of poor white families like the McCallums, Joneses, or the Bundrens – characters who are indeed as unpretentious as their dwellings.

In his third novel, *Flags in the Dust*, the reader can find a perfect example of a dogtrot cabin that demonstrates the simplicity and roughness of this particular Southern house type. After having caused old Bayard's death, young Bayard Sartoris has to flee to the McCallums in the northeastern sector of the county in order to find a temporary sanctuary there:

> At last a pale and windless plume of smoke stood above the trees, against the sky, and in the rambling, mudchinked wall a window glowed with ruddy invitation across the twilight. […] The walls were of chinked logs; upon them hung two colored outdated calendars and a patent medicine lithograph. The floor was bare, of hand-trimmed boards scuffed with heavy boots and polished by the pads of generations of dogs; two men could lie side by side in the fireplace. In it now four-foot logs blazed against the clay fireback; […] "Take these hyer damn dawgs out till after supper" (FID, pp.356-358).

For Ruzicka, the McCallum dogtrot with its simplicity and hardy craftsmanship represents the "independence and Spartan virtues" of the yeoman stock which populates the barren mountain regions of Yoknapatawpha County (1987, p.85). According to Knight, the McCallum dogtrot is used on a metaphorical plane to catch a "glimpse of the vanishing rural South" (1999, p.249). Yet most important of all, this dogtrot cabin is representative of the moral strength and sense of togetherness that characterize the McCallum family.

In "The Tall Men" [1941], published thirteen years after *Flags in the Dust*, Faulkner uses the McCallums and their dogtrot cabin again in order to establish a contrast between the frontier tradition as represented by the McCallums ["honor and pride and discipline that make a man worth preserving, make him of any value" (CS, p.60)] and then modern America [with its "rules and regulations" (CS, p.59)] as represented by the investigator, Pearson.

In this story, a young investigator comes to the McCallums in order to serve a warrant for the McCallum twins. When he along with an old marshal approach the McCallum's grounds, they go "through a stout paintless gate in a picket fence up a brick walk between two rows of old shabby cedars, toward the rambling and likewise paintless sprawl of the two-story house in the open hall of which the soft lamplight glowed and the lower story of which, as the investigator now perceived, was of logs" (CS, p.46). In both the novel and the short story the cabin is rendered as a lamplit house glowing in the darkness. Although the weathered exterior of the house is of rather shabby appearance, its illuminated window indicates warmth and life. As Ruzicka notes, in both stories the "lamplight is quite mellow, holding an invitation from within the house" for visitors approaching from afar (1987, p.86). For the marshal, the simple and humble cabin represents the virtues of those who dwell in it and he enters that edifice uninhibited, whereas the investigator, on the other hand, perceives the shabby cabin as something that has a corrupting influence on those who enter the building: "The doddering old officer was not only at bottom one of these people, he had apparently been corrupted anew to his old, inherent, shiftless sloth and unreliability merely by entering the house" (CS, pp.48, 49). At the end of the story, when the investigator is taught a lesson about American history and frontiersmen values, he learns that this dogtrot does not

corrupt those who dwell in it but, quite the contrary, that it brings out the best in them. As Volpe remarks, "Pearson arrives at the McCallum farm contemptuous of the McCallums; he leaves an admirer of them" (2004, p.248).

Unlike its use in the novel, the image of the McCallum dogtrot in "The Tall Men" is far more elaborately rendered and Faulkner puts a stronger emphasis on the very qualities the cabin is supposed to convey. Even the historical background of the McCallum dogtrot surfaces in the short story: "And he [Anse McCallum] walked back to Mississippi [after the Civil War] with just about what he had carried away with him when he left, and he got married and built the first story of this house – this here log story we're [Pearson and the marshal] in right now – and started getting them boys […]" (CS, p.54). [For a similar development of the McCaslin dogtrot into a large house see page 79]. From its very beginning, this dogtrot cabin has been serving as a symbol for the McCallum family. It represents their endurance, their ability to cope with pain, their yearning to remain independent, and, most significantly, the patriarchal order within their cabin. Interestingly, the McCallum house has become a place completely absent of any females. Moreover, there is not even a single woman buried on the family cemetery in the vicinity of the cabin: "Buddy's wife wanted to be buried with her folks. I reckon she would have been right lonesome up here with just McCallums" (CS, p.60). This house absent of any females, however, questions the validity of the McCallums' pastoral way of life and values. Although Faulkner tries to offer a positive rendering of the McCallums, their house without women contrasts strongly with the sympathetic portrayal of their pastoral way of life. It appears, then, as if life in such places as the McCallum dogtrot is terrible for women.

In *The Hamlet*, Faulkner provides another brief account of the yeoman stock of Yoknapatawpha's hill region and he employs the image of the primitive cabin to show the simple way of life of farmers like the McCallums or the Armstids:

> [these farmers] brought no slaves and no Phyfe and Chippendale highboys; indeed, what they did bring most of them could (and did) carry in their hands. They took up land and built one- and two-room cabins and never painted them, and married one another and produced children and added other rooms one by one to the original cabins and did not paint them either, but that was all (p.5).

In the same novel, Faulkner also takes use of a dogtrot to highlight the economic situation of Mink Snopes. As Mink returns home from the murder of Houston, he ponders his poverty as expressed by the shabbiness of his run-down cabin:

> It was dusk. He [Mink] emerged from the bottom and looked up the slope of his meager and sorry corn and saw it – the paintless two-room cabin with an open hallway between and a lean-to kitchen, which was not his, on which he paid rent but not taxes, paying almost as much in rent in one year as the house had cost to build; not old, yet the roof of which already leaked and the weather-stripping had already begun to rot away from the wall planks and which was just like the one he had been born in which had not belonged to his father either, and just like the one he would die in if he died indoors […] and it was just like the more than six others he had lived in since his marriage and like the twice that many more he would live in before he did die and although he paid rent on this one he was unalterably convinced that his cousin [Flem] owned it and he knew that this was as near as he would ever come to owning the roof over his head (p.243).

Although Mink pays as much rent on this cabin in a single year as the cabin has cost to be built, he will never be able to become the owner of it. To him as well as to his father before, the cabin remains a constant reminder of his dependence on the landlord. Millgate contends that the description of Mink's cabin is significant "for its own sake, as an additional facet of the analytical portrait of the area, but it is also crucial to our understanding of Mink himself and of the reasons why he murders Houston. Thus there is obvious dramatic point in the utter poverty of the place being evoked through the eyes of Mink himself […]" (1989, p.192).

When Mink goes to a neighboring Negro cabin to find his axe, he says that this cabin is "shabbier than his" but when he runs through the Negro's cornfield, he realizes that the black man's corn is "better than his" (HAM, p.276). Comparing his own cabin and fields to the Negro's dwelling and fields, Mink comprehends that his economic and social situation is far lower than a black man's standing. In *The Mansion*, Mink expresses the same kind of awareness when he thinks about the reasons that made him kill Houston:

> […] he would walk up the muddy road in the dreary and fading afternoons to watch Houston's pedigree beef herd, his own sorry animal among them, move, not hurrying, toward and into the barn which was

> warmer and tighter against the weather than the cabin he lived in, to be fed by the hired Negro who wore warmer clothing than any he and his family possessed, cursing into the steamy vapor of his own breathing, cursing the Negro for his black skin inside the warmer garments than his, a white man's, cursing the rich feed devoted to cattle instead of humans even though his own animal shared it; cursing above all the unaware white man [Houston] through or because of whose wealth such a condition could obtain […] (MAN, pp.688, 689).

As Mink is being taken to the Jefferson jail and passes the "prosperous world of Jefferson" (Millgate 1989, p.193), his utter poverty becomes the more apparent when he watches this better part of Jefferson – a comparison that is just shattering:

> […] the surrey moving now beneath an ordered overarch of sunshot trees, between the clipped and tended lawns where children shrieked and played in bright small garments in the sunset and the ladies sat rocking in the fresh dresses of afternoon and the men coming home from work turned into the neat painted gates, toward plates of food and cups of coffee in the long beginning of twilight (HAM, p.285).

For Millgate, this world is completely alien to Mink and the fellow inhabitants of Frenchman's Band and its environs, because this "description at once extends, by contrast, the definition of these people's lives", as this critic's analysis shows:

> Instead of 'clipped and tended lawns' the properties on which the poor whites like Mink, Ab Snopes, […] live have yards that are 'weed-choked and grass-grown' and give an overall appearance of 'cluttered desolation' (pp.53, 54); they have no 'neat painted gates,' for both Ab's and Mink's gates are broken and even their cabins remain paintless; their womenfolk wear 'gray shapeless' (p.331) garments, not the 'fresh dresses of afternoon' […] (1989, p.193)

When Mink leaves the Parchman prison, he does not even have a home to stay in. As Gavin Stevens remarks: "Even the tenant house he lived in either collapsed of itself or maybe somebody found it and chopped it up and hauled it away for firewood" (MAN, p.1011). But Mink is nonetheless able to find shelter in a cabin:

> So what he found was not only what he was hunting for but what he had expected: a weathered paintless dog-trot cabin enclosed and backed by a ramshackle of also-paintless weathered fences and outhouses – barns, cribs, sheds – on a rise of ground above a creek-

> bottom cotton patch where he could already see the whole Negro family and perhaps a neighbor or so too dragging the long stained sacks more or less abreast up the parallel rows – the father, the mother, five children […], and four girls and young men who were probably the neighbors swapping the work, he, Mink, waiting […] until the father, who would be the boss, reached him (MAN, p.1032).

After having worked together side-by-side out on the cornfield, the black man invites Mink to have supper in his house. Yet the patriarchal order of the Jefferson society is also existent in this very humble dwelling. This becomes apparent in the way the family [especially the wife] behaves when Mink enters their cabin:

> The dining room was an oilcloth-covered table bearing a coal-oil lamp in the same lean-to room where the wood-burning stove now died slowly. He ate alone, the family had vanished, the house itself might have been empty, the plate of fried sidemeat and canned corn and tomatoes stewed together, the pale soft barely cooked biscuits, the cup of coffee already set and waiting for him when the man called him to come and eat. Then he returned to the front room where a few wood embers burned on the hearth against the first cool of autumn night; immediately the wife and the oldest girl rose and went back to the kitchen to set the meal for the family (MAN, p.1034).

In *Flags in the Dust*, Faulkner introduced the motif of a white man being invited to eat in a black man's cabin for the first time. As young Bayard enters that cabin, he sees that a fire burns on the broken hearth, "amid ashes and charred wood-ends and a litter of cooking vessels. Bayard shut the door behind him, upon the bright cold, and warmth and rich, stale rankness enveloped him. A woman bent over the fire replied to his greeting diffidently" (FID, p.391). Unlike the black woman in *The Mansion*, the female character in *Flags in the Dust* refuses to leave the room behind – although she acknowledges Bayard's presence with some disgust. In *The Mansion*, by contrast, Faulkner clearly emphasized the black woman's awareness of gender differences, which results in their decision to leave that room for Mink.

At the end of the novel, when Mink is going to kill his cousin Flem Snopes, a task to which he has dedicated his whole life during the very thirty-eight years he had spent in Parchman, he is suddenly proud of his cousin's achievements. And for one single instant, Mink questions the correctness of his decision to kill Flem because he is really impressed with Flem's possession of a big mansion:

> […] looking in fact at the vast white columned edifice with something like pride that someone named Snopes owned it; […] at another time, tomorrow, though he himself would never dream nor really ever want to be received in it, he would have said proudly to a stranger: "My cousin lives there. He owns it" (MAN, p.1043).

Of course, Mink cannot forgive Flem for having neglected and fooled him in jail. After the murder of his relative, Mink escapes to the outskirts of Jefferson where he seeks shelter in the skeletal ruins of an old house. Mink thus comes to a symbolic place that is at least as dilapidated and ruined as his very own existence:

> Then he [Ratliff] said, "There it is" – a canted roof line where one end of the gable had collapsed completely (Stevens did not recognise, he simply agreed it could once have been a house) above which stood one worn gnarled cedar. He almost stumbled through, across what had been a fence, a yard fence, fallen too, choked fiercely with rose vines long since gone wild again. […] And now, in a crumbling slant downward into, through, what had been the wall's foundation, an orifice, a black and crumbled aperture yawned at their feet as if the ruined house itself had gaped at them. […] Ratliff […] followed, into the old cellar – the cave, the den where on a crude platform he [Mink] had heaped together, the man they sought […] blinking up at them like a child interrupted at its bedside prayers (MAN, pp.1061, 1062).

Hidden in what once was the basement of a house, Mink virtually tried to be buried under the earth for the murder he had committed. Now, Mink's long walk home has finally come to an end. As Millgate comments on this issue, "after a lifetime of labor, suffering, and unceasing struggle against known and unknown powers […] Mink returns at the close towards that earth which he fears, but with which he has always been associated" (1989, pp.250, 251).

In the context of vernacular architecture, Faulkner's early novels reflect his growing awareness of how to use primitive houses in order to symbolize the arduous life of his poor black and white families who live a life full of privation [as seen in the discussion of the McCallum dogtrot above]. In the opening chapter of his fifth novel, *As I Lay Dying*, for instance, Faulkner uses the image of a dilapidated cotton house to symbolize the decay that will seize the Bundren family both mentally and physically on their long journey to the Jefferson cemetery where the matriarch Addie wants to be buried:

> The cottonhouse is of rough logs, from between which the chinking has long fallen. Square, with a broken roof set at a single pitch, it leans in empty and shimmering dilapidation in the sunlight, a single broad window in two opposite walls giving onto the approaches of the path (AIDL, p.4).

Although Faulkner's novel does not offer any direct description of the Bundren house itself, the reader is nevertheless able to imagine the immediate environs of such a rotten edifice and thus gets a negative impression of the Bundren dwelling.

In *Light in August*, Faulkner employs the image of a run-down Negro cabin, on the one hand, to emphasize the difference between blacks and whites and, on the other hand, to establish a contrast between death and life. In this novel, a "tumble down Negro cabin on Miss Burden's place" is the chosen residence of Joe Christmas. As Byron Bunch says, Christmas is living "in a old nigger cabin in the back [of Joanna's house]. Christmas fixed it up three years ago. He's been living in it ever since, with folks wondering where he slept at night" (LIA, p.79). In fact, the villagers lack any knowledge about Joe Christmas's very existence there and, of course, they would never expect to find him living in a dilapidated Negro cabin. For the villagers, however, this cabin is solely a place for blacks. Yet for Joe himself, this place seems to be an accurate dwelling for he believes he has Negro blood, "because the black blood drove him first to the negro cabin. And then the white blood drove him out of there, as it was the black blood which snatched up the pistol and the white blood which would not let him fire it" (LIA, p.449). It is exactly this lack of knowledge whether he has 'black blood' or not that drives him to the cabin. Moreover, he also equates the image of a cabin with being black and the image of the house with being white: "he could feel, remember, somewhere a house, a cabin. House or cabin, white or black: he could not remember which" (LIA, p.334).

Joe's preference to dwell in this cabin is not only an expression of his belief to have 'black blood'; it is in fact "the nearest thing to a home he ever had and ever will have […]" (LIA, p.314). But Joe's belief to be a Negro proves to be fatal and he feels urged to kill Joanna Burden – a murder which in turn leads to his own killing as well. Thus, this dilapidated cabin is likewise symbolic of Joe's disastrous fate and, in consequence, of his approaching death. On the other hand,

this cabin also becomes the dwelling of Lena Grove [after Joe's death] who needs it as a place to give birth to her child. Thus, the same place that served Joe as a sanctuary has now become the locus of a "symbolic rebirth" – for Lena's child gives new life to the run-down plantation (Millgate 1989, p.134). This becomes particularly clear in Hightower's meditation about the nature of this place:

> He emerges from the woods at the far side of the pasture behind the cabin. Beyond the cabin he can see the clump of trees in which the house had stood and burned, though from here he cannot see the charred and mute embers of what were once planks and beams. 'Poor woman', he thinks. 'Poor, barren woman. To have not lived only a week longer, until luck returned to this place. Until luck and life returned to these barren and ruined acres.' It seems to him that he can see, feel, about him the ghosts of rich fields, and of the rich fecund black life of the quarters, the mellow shouts, the presence of fecund women, the prolific naked children in the dust before the doors; and the big house again, noisy, loud with the treble shouts of the generations (pp.406, 407).

The cabin as a place where a woman gives birth to a child is also a recurrent motif in *Absalom, Absalom!* and "Wash" [1933]. In both narratives, Millie Jones gives birth to Sutpen's daughter in a crazy cabin set on the grounds of Sutpen Hundred, but Wash Jones kills both his granddaughter and her newborn child in cold blood there. In the novel, Charles Bon's son is also "born in one of the dilapidated slave cabins which he rebuilt after renting his parcel of land from Judith" (AA, p.167).

In the short story "Wash", Jones' cabin is described as a "crazy shack on a slough in the river bottom on the Sutpen place, which Sutpen had built for a fishing lodge in his bachelor days and which had since fallen into dilapidation from disuse, so that now it looked like an aged or sick wild beast crawled terrifically there to drink in the act of dying" (CS, p.536). This crazy shack is first and foremost a marker of class. When some blacks try to tease Wash Jones, they allude to his shabby shack and signify thus their higher social and economic standing for they live in better quarters than him: "'Niggers?' they repeated; 'niggers?' laughing now. 'Who him, calling us niggers?' 'Yes,' he [Wash] said. 'I ain't got no niggers to look after my folks if I was gone.' 'Nor nothing else but dat shack down yon dat Cunnel wouldn't *let* none of us in'" (CS, p.537).

It has to be noted that shacks are small buildings that are not built very well and chiefly serve as storage room for tools. Thus, they are even worse than cabins. Yet the image of Wash's shack is also used as a counterpart to Sutpen's mansion. This shack is the sum of all of Wash's achievements, while Sutpen's big mansion represents everything that Wash adores about Sutpen and the like. But at the end of the story, when Wash finally realizes the sinister nature of his once adored master, he slays Sutpen with a scythe in cold blood. Too weak or too disillusioned to go away or to hide someplace else, Wash remains in his shack and waits for the sheriff to come and take him. As de Spain arrives with some men later that day in order to arrest him, Wash kills both his daughter and his granddaughter in the dark cabin in order to spare them the kind of experience he has undergone: "*Better that all who remain of us be blasted from the face the earth than that another Wash Jones should see his whole life shredded from him and shrivel away like a dried shuck thrown into the fire*" (CS, pp.548, 549). Setting the cabin on fire, then, Wash tries to extinguish every trace of his poor existence:

> He knew where in the dark the can of kerosene was, just as he knew that it was full, since it was not two days ago that he had filled it at the store and held it there until he got a ride home with it, since the five gallons were heavy. There were still coals on the hearth; besides, the crazy building itself was like tinder: the coals, the hearth, the walls exploding in a single blue glare. Against it the waiting men saw him in a wild instant springing toward them with the lifted scythe before the horses reared and whirled. They checked the horses and turned them back toward the glare, yet still in wild relief against it the gaunt figure ran toward them with the lifted scythe. 'Jones!' the sheriff shouted; 'stop! Stop, or I'll shoot. Jones! *Jones!*' Yet still the gaunt, furious figure came on against the glare and roar of the flames (CS, p.550).

Like the grim reaper, Jones tries to slay his opponents but, of course, they shoot him down. Wash knows that he is just "white trash" whose action will not be understood by those "men of Sutpen's kind" who had "galloped in the old days arrogant and proud on the fine horses across the fine plantations – symbols also of admiration and hope; instruments too of despair and grief" (CS, p.547). Yet the burning of Wash's crazy shack not only indicates the end of the Jones family, it also foreshadows the burning of Sutpen's mansion some forty years later.

In *The Sound and the Fury*, the image of dilapidated cabins is used to illustrate the living conditions of the black population in the South. The poverty and shabbiness of these cabins is intensified by the use of dead nature imagery:

> A street turned off at right angles, descending, and became a dirt road. On either hand the land dropped more sharply, a broad flat dotted with small cabins whose weathered roofs were on a level with the crown of the road. They were set in small grassless plots littered with broken things, bricks, planks, crockery, things of a once utilitarian value. What growth there was consisted of rank weeds and the trees were mulberries and locusts and sycamores – trees that partook also of the foul desiccation which surrounded the houses; trees whose very burgeoning seemed to be the sad and stubborn remnant of September, as if even spring had passed them by, leaving them to feed upon the rich and unmistakable smell of Negroes in which they grew (SF, p.181).

In *Knight's Gambit*, Faulkner returns to the image of a decayed cabin once more. As Benbow Sartoris returns to Jefferson on leave from the Army in 1942, he gazes out of a train window and watches the outskirts of Jefferson passing by:

> […] the first Negro cabins weathered and paintless until you realised it was more than just that and that they were a little, just a little awry, not out of plumb so much as beyond plumb: as though created for, seen in or by a different perspective, by a different architect, for a different purpose or anyway with a different past: […], each in its fierce yet orderly miniature jungle of vegetable patch, […], and usually a tethered cow and a few chickens, the whole thing – cabin outhouse washpot shed and well – having a quality flimsy and make-shift, alien yet inviolably durable like Crusoe's cave; then the houses of white people, no larger than the Negro ones but never cabins, not to their faces anyway or you'd probably have a fight on your hands, painted or at least once painted, the main difference being that they wouldn't be quite so clean inside (KG, pp.240, 241).

For Hines, this excerpt demonstrates that pieces of vernacular architecture such as, for example, Negro cabins, continue to appear on the outskirts of Jefferson even in the twentieth century, "with subtle markings in their maintenance and accoutrements" while still demarcating class and race (Hines 1996, p.29).

In *Intruder in the Dust*, Faulkner describes a young character's impressions of Jefferson's countryside while driving along with his uncle, Gavin Stevens. In the following excerpt, Faulkner again links the image of the dilapidated cabin

with black life in order to highlight the blacks' poverty and the remote location of their cabins, which are located quite a distance away from any white settlements,

> They were going quite fast now, faster than he could ever remember his uncle driving, […]; now he could see […] the farmhouses from which no smoke rose because breakfast was long over by now and no dinner to be cooked where none would be home to eat it, the paintless Negro cabins where on Monday morning in the dust of the grassless treeless yards halfnaked children should have been crawling and scrabbling after broken cultivator wheels and wornout automobile tires and empty snuff-bottles and tin cans and in the back yards smoke-blackened iron pots should have been bubbling over wood fires beside the sagging fences of vegetable patches and chickenruns which by nightfall would be gaudy with drying overalls and aprons and towels and unionsuits: […] (ITD, pp.146,147).

Although the novels mentioned above do offer a brief description of black settlements in the vicinity of Jefferson, they are still deficient in rendering the lives and homes of those who live there. In fact, there are only a few black characters who occupy a prominent position in the narratives of Faulkner's novels [Lucas Beauchamp, Ned, Sam Fathers]. In his short stories, by contrast, Faulkner gives some black characters inhabiting a cabin a name and an identity. In "That Evening Sun", to begin with, Faulkner shows the plight of Nancy, a black woman who works as a laundress and substitute cook for the Compsons. Nancy fears that her husband is lying wait for her in the darkness outside her cabin in order to kill her because she had sex for money with white men. The story opens with a description of modern Jefferson and the narrator, Quentin Compson, muses about the old days when the "shady streets would be full of Negro women with, balanced on their steady, turbaned heads, bundles of clothes tied up in sheets, almost as large as cotton bales, carried so without touch of hand between the kitchen door of the white house and the blackened washpot beside a cabin door in Negro Hollow" (CS, p.289). In the old days, the laundresses did not wash the clothes in the neat houses of their masters – they had to fetch the dirty clothes and wash them in their own quarters. As Quentin's recollections show, the Negro quarter is clearly separated from the white settlement for Nancy has to walk "down into the ditch and up the other side", before she can stoop "through the

fence" to go to her cabin in Negro Hollow (CS, p.290). For Rosenman, "the ditch is a racial boundary that divides Jefferson's white and black worlds. The white Compson children are not allowed to enter it without an adult" (1978, p.12).

But when Dilsey is sick for a while, Nancy is allowed to enter the Compson mansion in order to cook for the family. Even her husband, Jesus, had once been allowed to be there before "father [Mr. Compson] told Jesus to stay off [their] place" (CS, p.292). Although he is told not to be in the Compson house, Jesus still enters the house to see Nancy working in the kitchen. When she scolds him for being there, Jesus is angry about his powerlessness against the white society and he criticizes the inequality of power between the different races in terms of house imagery: "'I cant hang around white man's kitchen' Jesus said. 'But white man can hang around mine. White man can come in my house, but I cant stop him. When white man want to come in my house, I aint got no house. I cant stop him, but he cant kick me outen it. He cant do that'" (CS, p.292). For Towner, Jesus' criticism on the white man contains the essence of the racial reality in this story (2000, p.20).

In his account of an incident that happened one evening fifteen years ago, Quentin describes how Nancy desperately tries to remain in the Compson house after her work is done for she fears that Jesus is lurking around her cabin. For Nancy, the Compson mansion is a kind of shelter that can protect her from her husband because no black person would break into the Compson mansion. Since Mrs. Compson, like Elly's grandmother [Ailanthia], "cant have Negroes sleeping in the bedrooms" (CS, p.299), Nancy is forced to go to her cabin where she believes Jesus will kill her. This is why Nancy persuades the Compson children Quentin, Caddy, and Jason to go with her to her cabin for she is convinced that Jesus will do her no harm as long as the Compson children accompany her:

> She was talking loud when we crossed the ditch and stooped through the fence where she used to stoop through with the clothes on her head. Then we came to her house. We were going fast then. She opened the door. The smell of the house was like the lamp and the smell of Nancy was like the wick, like they were waiting for one another to begin to smell. She lit the lamp and closed the door and put the bar up. Then she quit talking loud, looking at us. [...].

> There was something about Nancy's house; something you could smell besides Nancy and the house. Jason smelled it, even. "I don't want to stay here," he said. "I want to go home" (CS, pp.301, 302).

Throughout the whole text, Nancy's abode is alternately called either a house or a cabin – depending on the racial status of those who are talking about it. As Skei points out, "[…] the black characters call Nancy's place a 'house' while all the white characters use 'cabin'" (1999, p.193).

In the same way as Joe Christmas distinguishes between the concept of a house [a white man's abode] and a cabin [a black man's abode], so the white community [as represented by Quentin] distinguishes between a cabin and a house in order to demarcate racial differences. For the white community, the word cabin is used to emphasize their racial and social superiority, while the black community considers a cabin just as a home.

However, Quentin's first impression of Nancy's cabin is its smell, which he instantly connects with black people. In his view, Nancy and the smell are inseparably connected [wick and a lamp]. In addition, he sees the wick as a symbol for Nancy because her life seems to be running out like a burning candle. Despite the fact that it is already hot inside her cabin, Nancy is nevertheless building up the fire while she tells the children a story about a queen that parallels her very own situation and her fear of what may be hidden in the ditch:

> She came and sat in a chair before the hearth. There was a little fire there. Nancy built it up, when it was already hot inside. She built a good blaze. She told a story. She talked like her eyes looked, like her eyes watching us and her voice talking to us did not belong to her. […]. She was outside the cabin. Her voice was inside and the shape of her, the Nancy that could stoop under a barbed wire fence with a bundle of clothes balanced on her head as though without weight, like a balloon, was there. But that was all. "And so this here queen come walking up to the ditch, where that bad man was hiding. She was walking up to the ditch, and she say, 'If I can just get past this here ditch,' was what she say…" (CS, p.302).

Nancy needs to have the fire built up and the lamp turned up so much that it smokes because she is afraid of the darkness. She is sure that only the light keeps Jesus at bay. Yet the images of fire and smoke make the cabin a hellish place that

reflects her belief that her soul might go to hell: "'I hellborn, child,' Nancy said. 'I wont be nothing soon. I going back where I come from soon'" (CS, p.298).

When Mr. Compson arrives in order to take his children back home, they leave Nancy behind in her cabin sitting before the fire: "She didn't look at us again, sitting quietly there between the lamp and the fire. From some distance down the lane we could look back and see her through the open door" (CS, p.308). Mr. Compson ignores Nancy's terror because he thinks that her fear is baseless and does not offer any further support. Bereft of any kind of protection now, Nancy gives in to her fate and waits for her husband to come and kill her. She refuses to close her door and sits quietly and alone against the firelight in her cabin. When the Compsons leave the cabin behind and cross the ditch, Quentin asks his father, "Who will do our washing now, Father?" (CS, p. 309). The young boy thus indicates his awareness that something terrible may happen to Nancy – but still he feels no obligation to help her. He is merely worried about having clean clothes, instead. The story has an open end and it depends upon the reader to decide whether Jesus will kill his wife or not. In *Requiem for a Nun*, published twenty years later, a very similar black character named Nancy appears again.

In "That Evening Sun", cabin imagery is an important detail to highlight differences between the black and the white community. The words cabin and house are not used synonymously by the white society whereas the black society does. The story also shows that the blacks' quarters are separated from the white society and that a cabin, as opposed to a mansion, is not really a sheltering abode.

The separation of black and white quarters also becomes apparent in "A Justice", another short story with a Compson context. Here, Quentin Compson once again muses over the significance of past events [Sam Father's origins]:

> Until grandfather died, we would go to the farm every Saturday afternoon. […] The farm was four miles away. There was a long, low house in the grove, not painted but kept whole and sound by a clever carpenter from the quarters named Sam Fathers, and behind it the barns and smokehouses, and further still, the quarters themselves, also kept whole and sound by Sam Fathers (CS, p.343).

Unlike the white society, the Indians of Yoknapatawpha do not differentiate between a cabin and a house. In "Red Leaves", another tale in "The Wilderness" section of the *Collected Stories*, the narrator states, "He is sitting in his cabin with his head in his blanket" (CS, p.349). All the Indians living within the plantation dwell in cabins, except for the Man who lives in a big house [a decaying steamboat]. In "Red Leaves", Faulkner also offers a more elaborate description of the Negro quarter set in the vicinity of the Indians' plantation:

> The two Indians crossed the plantation toward the slave quarters. Neat with whiteash, of baked soft brick, the two rows of houses in which lived the slaves belonging to the clan, faced one another across the mild shade of the lane, marked and scored with naked feet and with a few homemade toys mute in the dust. […]
>
> They entered the lane. The mute, meager toys – the fetish-shaped objects made of wood and rags and feathers – lay in the dust about the patinaed doorsteps, among bones and broken gourd dishes. But there was no sound from any cabin, no face in any door; (CS, pp. 313, 314).

In their imitation of the white man's plantation system, the Indians likewise built the quarters for the slaves at a little distance from their own living quarters. Thus, the Indians also keep the different races apart. In addition to that, their decaying steamboat [which is a distorted mirror image of the big plantation house] is set on a knoll surrounded by shady oak trees (CS, p.317), which enables the Man to have an overview of both the Indians' and the blacks' quarters. Here, Faulkner once more stresses the vertical dimension of a 'big house' in order to establish a contrast between the Indians and the blacks on the one hand, and between the Man and his subjects on the other hand.

Apart from their cabins, the story shows that the slaves also have a kind of public house for social gathering [the central cabin], which is used for ceremonies:

> It was in the central cabin, a house a little larger than the others, where at certain phases of the moon the Negroes would gather to begin their ceremonies before removing after nightfall to the creek bottom, where they kept the drums. In this room they kept the minor accessories, the cryptic ornaments, the ceremonial records which consisted of sticks daubed with red clay in symbols. It had a hearth in the center of the floor, beneath a hole in the roof, with a few cold wood ashes and a suspended iron pot. The window shutters were closed; when the two

> Indians entered, […] they could distinguish nothing with the eyes save a movement, shadow, out of which eyeballs rolled, so that the place appeared to be full of Negroes (CS, pp.314, 315).

According to Dabney, Faulkner turns the slave quarter into an African village in Mississippi, complete with council house, headman, and religious ceremonies carried out in the creek bottom according to the phases of the moon (1974, p.98). Yet Dabney's view of the Negro quarter is too positive, for the Indians keep black servants like stock in a breeding farm: "Up to that time the slaves had lived in a huge pen with a lean-to roof over one corner, like a pen for pigs. But now they began to build quarters, cabins, putting the young Negroes in the cabin in pairs to mate" (CS, p.320). Although the slave system provides money, the introduction of the white man's plantation system into the Indians' way of life is not accepted by any Indian character: "'I have said all the time that this is not the good way. In the old days there were no quarters, no Negroes. A man's time was his own then. He had time. Now he must spend most of it finding work for them who prefer sweating to do' […]. 'I do not like slavery. It's not the good way'" (CS, p.314). Another aspect worthy of note is that the slaves' cabins are not equipped with doors. Thus, the blacks are never able to create private spheres within their camp.

The single most important item that Faulkner offers in his descriptions of the interior of cabins is the image of the hearth. The hearth represents the center of a cabin – because it offers light and heat. In "The Fire and the Hearth", the second story in *Go Down, Moses*, the hearth becomes the central image of the story. For Faulkner, a fire on a hearth is a symbol for life and familial love. This is why Lucas Beauchamp is "keeping alive on the hearth the fire he had lit there on their wedding day and which had burned ever since […]" (GDM, p.46). The image of the hearth recurs throughout the whole story. In this context, the concordance to this novel lists twenty-three instances of the noun "hearth".

In "Pantaloon in Black", the third story in *Go Down, Moses*, Faulkner inverses the image of a fire and a hearth. Here, he employs the motif of a cold hearth as a means to express the loneliness and desperation of a black character [Rider] after his wife [Mannie] has died. When Rider returns home from his wife's burial, the empty house seems to have become an unbearable place for him:

> But when he put his hand on the gate it seemed to him suddenly that there was nothing beyond it. The house had never been his anyway, but now even the new planks and sills and shingles, the hearth and stove and bed were all a part of the memory of somebody else, so that he stopped in the half-open gate and said aloud, as though he had gone to sleep in one place and then waked suddenly to find himself in another: 'Whut's Ah doin hyar?' before he went on. […] They [Rider and his dog] mounted the steps and crossed the porch and entered the house – the dusk-filled single room where all those six months were now crammed and crowded into one instant of time until there was no space left for air to breathe, crammed and crowded about the hearth where the fire which was to have lasted to the end of them, in front of which in the days before he was able to buy the stove he would enter after his four-mile walk from the mill and find her, the shape of her narrow back and haunches squatting, one narrow spread hand shielding her face from the blaze over which the other hand held the skillet, had already fallen to a dry, light soilure of dead ashes when the sun rose yesterday – and himself standing there while the last of light died about the strong and indomitable beating of his heart and the deep steady arch and collapse of his chest which walking fast over the rough going of woods and fields had not increased and standing still in the quiet and fading room had not slowed down (US, pp.241, 242).

In his reading of this story, Skei also elaborates on the 'fire and the hearth'- image employed in the "Pantaloon in Black" context and he asserts:

> Renting the last house in the lane from Carothers Edmonds, he [Rider] had built a hearth in it and started a fire there on the night he married, intending to keep it burning like Lucas Bauchamp had done for forty-five years. The image of 'the fire and the hearth' is significant also in this story, not because of what it shows of endurance and durability but because of the expectations attached to it. […] The fire on the hearth should have burned on into a bright and happy future, but he realizes 'that there was nothing beyond it' (1999, pp.128, 129).

Here, the cold stove symbolizes the end of a happy marriage and foreshadows thus Rider's impending death. Like some other uprooted characters such as Willy Christian or the aviators in *Pylon* and "Death Drag", Rider is doomed to fail. Since he cannot bear being in his cabin any longer, Rider no longer has a home or a place somewhere else to go to anymore. As a result of this, he seeks comfort in alcohol and kills a white man in a crap-game because he wants to be sentenced to death in order to be reunited with his wife.

In “Centaur in Brass”, Faulkner again makes use of the ‘fire and the hearth’-image. After Tom-Tom and his colleague Turl had realized that they were part of Flem Snopes’ scheme to steal brass from the power plant, they stopped fighting and “climbed out of the ditch [separating the black society from the white world] and returned to Tom-Tom’s cabin, where Tom-Tom unlocked his wife, and he and Turl sat before the hearth while the woman prepared a meal for them, which they ate as quietly but without loss of time: […], while in the background the woman watched them” (CS, p.165). Here, the ‘fire and hearth’- motif is utilized to show the reconciliation of two blacks [Turl had an affair with Tom-Tom’s wife], who were framed by Flem and who have joined forces in order to take revenge.

In *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*, Faulkner employs cabin imagery for very different purposes. In the opening chapter of the subnarrative entitled “The Wild Palms”, Faulkner employs a cabin as a medium to contrast the lives of the young couple, Harry and Charlotte, with the lives of an older married couple [the doctor and his wife]. Since the doctor and his wife serve as a mirror image of the young couple, “they represent what Harry, a medical student, and Charlotte, stifled in a conventional marriage, might have become” (McHaney 1975, p. 26). Whereas the doctor and his wife own both “the house which his father had built” and “the beach house where he and his wife spent their childless summers” (WP, p.4), Harry and Charlotte are merely able to rent the old couple’s ill-furnished cabin for a short time [which is separated from the doctor’s house by a hedge of oleander]:

> They [Harry and Charlotte] took possession that afternoon of that cottage, the shack, which contained the one bed whose springs and mattress were not very good, and the stove with its one frying pan incrusted by generations of cooking fish, and the coffee pot and the meager collection of mismatched iron spoons and forks and knives and cracked up cups and saucers and drinking vessels which had once been containers of bought jams and jellies […] (WP, p.7).

When Harry and Charlotte enter this coastal town, they have only thirty dollars at their disposal. After having paid the rent for two weeks in advance, they are left with just twenty dollars cash – which indicates the impending end of their journey [New Orleans – Chicago – Michigan – Utah – Texas – Mississippi]. Moreover, their bleak shelter is also used on a metaphorical plane to indicate that something

terrible is going to happen to them: "In the black wind, the house, the shack [where Charlotte lies bleeding in her bed after a botched abortion performed by Harry], stood, itself invisible, the dim light shaped not by any door or window but rather like a strip of dim and forlorn bunting dingy and rigidly immobile in the wind" (WP, p.15). In the darkness of the night, this cabin appears like a structure without doors or windows [and therefore without entrance or exit]. Thus it appears to be a kind of coffin containing the dying body of Charlotte Rittenmeyer.

In the second subnarrative, "The Old Man", Faulkner offers the portrayal of a crazy shack set somewhere in a swamp, where the tall convict and the woman with her baby are able to find a temporary shelter from the gigantic flood:

> […] the house, the cabin a little larger than a horse-box, of cypress boards and an iron roof, rising on ten-foot stilts slender as spiders' legs, like a shabby and death-stricken (and probably poisonous) wading creature which had got that far into that flat waste and died with nothing anywhere in reach or sight to lie down upon, a pirogue tied to the foot of a crude ladder, a man standing in the open door holding a lantern […]. […] the little lost spider-legged house (which had already begun to die, to rot from the legs upward almost before the roof was nailed on) set in that teeming and myriad desolation, enclosed and lost within the furious embrace of flowing mare earth and stallion sun (WP, pp.211, 214).

It is striking that the Cajun's shack is also rendered like a dying animal – just like Wash Jones' shack on the Sutpen estate which "looked like an aged or sick wild beast [that] crawled terrifically there to drink in the act of dying" (CS, p.536). For Vickery, the Cajun's settlement represents a primitive form of society, which "provides a precarious and merely temporary equilibrium between the individual, the community, and nature" (1964, p.159).

Since many themes and motifs rendered in "The Wild Palms" are somehow echoed in "The Old Man" and vice versa, so Faulkner likewise uses the image of a cabin as a means to establish contrast between the main characters of these alternating stories. Whereas Harry and Charlotte *lose* money on every single day they have to spend in their cabin, the tall convict *makes* money every single day he lives within the rotten shack because he goes out catching alligators with the Cajun who owns the shack. Unfortunately, this place is merely a temporary shelter

– after the authorities have blown-up the levee, the tall convict and his company are forced to leave the shack and they have to enter their skiff again in order to make their way up to Vicksburg.

To sum up this chapter, on the one hand, the image of the cabin is used to render black life and culture and, on the other hand, it refers to the hardship of poor white families [especially landless sharecroppers and the yeomen stock]. In this respect, the principal aim of cabin imagery is to designate class and race and a very low social status.

Moreover, Faulkner heightens the effect of cabin imagery by using the binary oppositions cabin – mansion. As shown in chapter 6.1.2, the image of the mansion is not only used to show who is at the very top of Jefferson's social strata; the mansion also represents those who own the very lives of those who are forced to work as sharecroppers on the owner's fields for a sparse remuneration – which, in turn, likewise explains why the poor live in cabins and not in houses.

In addition to that, cabins are basically one-roomed or two-roomed edifices whereas houses usually encompass several rooms. Since houses are subdivided into different rooms like kitchen, bathroom, bedrooms, dining room, parlor, and salon, for example, the inhabitants are thus able to allocate certain functions to different rooms. Cabins, by contrast, provide a cramped space within which the inhabitants have to live, sleep, cook, wash, and eat, to state just a few examples. As a result of this, cabins cannot provide any private spaces at all whereas houses do. Seen this way, cabins are private houses which harbor an almost public house-like character.

In some narratives, cabins also define a certain code of conduct for females. For instance, women have to leave the cabin when a male visitor appears or when the male inhabitants return home from work to eat. This makes clear that even cabins are representative of the patriarchal order of the Old South – despite the fact this building type is supposed to designate a space where the inhabitants seem to be rather free of any kind of restrictions and limitations.

Since cabins are set apart from the spaces of the white community and thus chiefly located in black ghettoes like 'Negro Hollow' in the outskirts of the town, they are also instrumental in underscoring the principle of racial segregation.

It is also striking that Faulkner's fictional cabins are usually rendered as paintless and weather-beaten structures badly in need of repair and maintenance. Yet the image of a dilapidated cabin is not only a symbol of its inhabitant's miserable poverty but it is also a reminder that the owners of such cabins like Will Varner or Flem Snopes still get rent for these shabby structures although they do not care about these dwellings and their inhabitants at all [see chapter 6.2.3].

Interestingly, cabin imagery as employed in Faulkner's later novels [as, for instance, *The Mansion*] shares similarities with his use of plantation houses. Time and again, the reader can discover abandoned and vacant cabins in Faulkner's imaginary county. Thus, one can conclude that Faulkner's later novels reflect the vanishing of the rural South and thus the advent of the industrialization in Yoknapatawpha County. Since the living conditions of the black population improved after the Second World War, cabins were abandoned for black people were able to move to newly created suburbs like Eula Acres or Halcyon Acres – erected on the grounds of former plantations [see chapter 6.1.1], or they left the county and moved to the North to find work as factory hands.

Cabins are also linked to windows and doors since many cabins do not have windowpanes or even doors at all – as seen in "Red Leaves".

In the light of this, it becomes clear that the image of the cabin in Faulkner is undeniably as significant as the image of the plantation house or the mansion. To conclude this chapter, a final remark will be given on the role of cabins in the context of a house based-society. In the context of a house-based society, it has to be noted that cabins practically epitomize the inversion of the fourth principle defined by González-Ruibal ["houses must be an arena for social competition and this may be reflected in prestige materials associated to houses"]. Seen this way, the image of the cabin helps to underscore even more the significance of upper class dwellings like mansions or plantation houses as key symbolic elements for the Jefferson society.

## 6.2 Public Houses in Faulkner

As shown in the previous chapters, many private buildings such as the Sartoris house, Sutpen's Hundred, or de Spain's mansion are landmarks of the old plantation society. Yet at the turn of the 20h century, many of these private houses ceased to exist or lost its former significance, whereas public houses became more and more important as Jefferson developed into a modern city. Most of these public buildings are clustered around the square – the symbolic center of Faulkner's fictional locale. This chapter highlights public houses that recurrently appear in Faulkner's writings and reveals which ones are of chief significance.

### 6.2.1 Stores

Despite all of its prominent plantations and mansions, Jefferson's very beginnings were not characterized by significant private houses but by a very humble public house, instead. This fact is presented in the "Compson Appendix", where Faulkner offers the following account of Jefferson's very first building:

> […] a solid square mile of virgin North Mississippi dirt as truly angled as the four corners of a cardtable top (forested then because these were the old days before 1833 when the stars fell and Jefferson, Mississippi was one long rambling onestorey mudchinked log building housing the Chickasaw Agent and his tradingpost store) (SF, p.203).

It was thus a store that initiated the foundation of Jefferson – which is not very surprising since stores are places of economy, trade, and entertainment and therefore vital for the development of a settlement. According to Hines, stores are significant public houses in Faulkner's work because they are "social as well as commercial structures, places to see and meet other people, to transact business, personal and professional; [they are] important stages in Faulkner's world of comings and goings for the most rural people whose visits to such places constituted a primitive window on a larger world" (1996, pp.31, 32). Hines thus stresses the social dimension of Jefferson's stores, whereas Gutting, by contrast, lays emphasis on the economic function of stores and other business institutions:

"While most of [Faulkner's] stores appear as spatial contexts of action, some stores gain in importance because they are treated elaborately as commercial edifices providing insight into the historical conditions of Jefferson's mercantile world" (1992, p.79). Hines and Gutting's observations are particularly true for those novels dealing with small town life such as, for instance, *The Hamlet*. Since the economic context of Yoknapatawpha County is an agricultural system in which cotton is "a king: omnipotent and omnipresent" (RFN, p.195) [see also chapter 6.1.1], so are many stores set in Faulkner's fictitious world oriented to farmers' needs and thus helpful in supporting this economic system.

To begin with, Varner's store in *The Hamlet* is not only the economic and social center of the little hamlet in Frenchman's Bend [because there is no place else where the citizens may go to in order to trade cotton or to get some entertainment and distraction], this place is also the ideal location to make clear how stores can be used to exploit landless tenants and poor independent farmers:

> Will Varner, […], was the chief man of the country. He was the largest landholder and beat supervisor in one county and Justice of the Peace in the next and election commissioner in both, and hence the fountainhead if not of law at least of advice and suggestion to a countryside which would have repudiated the term constituency if they had ever heard it, […]. He was a farmer, a usurer, a veterinarian; […]. He owned most of the good land in the country and held mortgages on most of the rest. He owned the store and the cotton gin and the combined grist mill and blacksmith shop in the village proper and it was considered, to put it mildly, bad luck for a man of the neighborhood to do his trading or gin his cotton or grind his meal or shoe his stock anywhere else (HAM, pp.5, 6).

In view of these facts, it becomes clear that Will Varner is the most powerful character in Frenchmen's Bend. Varner has absolute control of all legal, political, and business activities in the hamlet. He rents his land to poor tenant farmers and provides them with all the things they need for their farms. Once in a year, after the crops were in and ginned and sold, Varner visits his tenants and gives them a sparse remuneration for their crops [minus the interest (or usury) the tenants have to pay for borrowed goods like seeds], as can be seen in the following text:

> In the tunnel-like room lined with canned food and cluttered with farming implements and now crowded with patient earth-reeking men waiting to accept almost without question whatever Varner should compute he owed them for their year's work, Varner and Snopes resembled the white trader and his native parrot-taught headman in an African outpost. […] It was not known what the Varners paid him [Flem] except that Will Varner had never been known to pay very much for anything (HAM, p.67)

Ruling the hamlet like an African colony, Varner is the undisputable patriarch. Due to the fact that he holds mortgages on many farms there (HAM, p.4), Varner is entitled to own a debtor's house, land, or property if the debtor cannot pay back the money he owns to Varner within a certain period of time. And this is the reason why Varner has become the largest landholder of the county for hardly a tenant was able to repay his debts in time. As explicitly told in the final chapter of *Big Woods,* a tenant's cotton "was mortgaged before it [was] even planted and sold and the money spent before it [was] ever harvested, and usury and mortgage and bankruptcy and measureless wealth all breed and spawn together until no man has the time to say which one is which, or cares" (BW, p.212). In this context, Aiken criticizes this economic principle as follows: "The cotton system with its planters and tenants was part of a larger economic system that perpetually operated on borrowed money, with tenants in debt to planters, planters in debt to Memphis banks, and Memphis banks in debt to Northern banks" (1979, p.196).

In *Go Down, Moses*, published two years after *The Hamlet*, Faulkner addresses the same issue, once again. In chapter four of "The Bear", which deals primarily with the intricate McCaslin family history, the reader is told how the McCaslin store is instrumental in exploiting sharecroppers. The McCaslin commissary store, a "square, galleried, wooden building squatting like a portent above the fields whose laborer it still held in thrall '65 or no" is "not the heart perhaps but certainly the solar-plexus of the repudiated and relinquished" (GDM, p.244). All the sharecroppers working for the McCaslins buy there all the things they need and they pay for these things, like Will Varner's tenants, once in a year when they receive money from the McCaslins for their crops or cotton [minus interests]. The following text taken from *Go Down, Moses* reveals which items are available at the commissary store and how the McCaslins are paid for their goods:

> […] cheese and salt meat and kerosene and harness, the ranked shelves of tobacco and overalls and bottled medicine and thread and plow-bolts, the barrels and kegs of flour and meal and molasses and nails, the wall pegs dependent with plowlines and plow-collars and hames and trace-chains, and the desk and the shelf above it on which rested the ledgers in which McCaslin recorded the slow outward trickle of food and supplies and equipment which returned each fall as cotton made and ginned and sold (two threads frail as truth and impalpable as equators yet cable-strong to bind for life them who made the cotton to the land their sweat fell on), […] (pp.244, 245).

As this excerpt shows, Faulkner leaves no doubt that the slave system was not abolished but merely replaced by the sharecropping system in the years following the Civil War. As Gutting notes, "Faulkner interprets it [this economic principle] rather as the establishment of a new form of bondage that enables some plantation owners to keep control of the economics of cotton agriculture". In *The Town*, consequently, one is told that the "entire cotton economy of the South was founded and supported" on the backbone of the tenant system (TOW, p.591). And it is exactly this context within which one has to read Ike McCaslin's harsh remark, "this whole land, the whole South, is cursed, and all of us who derive from it, whom it ever suckled, white and black both, lie under the curse" (GDM, p.266).

Where does all the money gained from the exploitation of tenants go? And for which purposes will it be used? These questions can best be answered with an example. Varner, for instance, uses his money to own one of the biggest stock in the former Sartoris' bank. As a result, he is not only the undisputed ruler of Frenchmen's Bend [before Flem's arrival], but he is also able to control the business affairs of one important bank in Jefferson [see chapter 6.2.3].

At the beginning of the 20th century, when most of the big plantations have ceased to exist and sharecropping had become the dominant economic system of Faulkner's fictional county, some of the last representatives of the old plantation dynasties give up farming and try to run a store, instead. Sutpen, for example, runs a little crossroads store after returning home from the Civil War to earn the money needed to rebuild his ruined plantation – though it is clear from the very beginning that he cannot earn enough money to restore his plantation to former grandeur. Jason Compson, by contrast, is rather successful in his attempts to run a store. In

the "Compson Appendix", Faulkner gives a vivid portrayal of Jason Compson's store that is illustrative of his distorted relationship with women. His dark and gloomy store has nothing to offer to the female sex and appears as a place solely open for the male sex, as the librarian learns when she enters it for the first time,

> [she enters] the farmer's supply store where Jason IV had started as a clerk and where he now owned his own business as a buyer of and dealer in cotton, striding on through that gloomy cavern which only men ever entered – a cavern cluttered and walled and stalagmitehung with plows and discs and loops of tracechain and singletrees and mulecollars and sidemeat and cheap shoes and horselinament and flour and molasses, […] and stroke on back to Jason's particular domain in the rear: a railed enclosure cluttered with shelves and pigeonholes bearing spiked dust-and-lintgathering gin receipts and ledgers and cottonsamples and rank with the blended smell of cheese and kerosene and harnessoil and the tremendous iron stove against which chewed tobacco had been spat for almost a hundred years, and up to the long high sloping counter behind which Jason [stands] and, not looking again at the overalled men who had quietly stopped talking and even chewing when she [has] entered (SF, p.209).

Jason's store is merely a ramshackle repository and less than attractive to females. The store is just like Jason himself: a shabby thing that keeps women at bay. For Hines, Jason's store indicates that there are public places which are accepted as male or female domains, and "the transgression of which had important symbolic connotations of self-assured determinations" (1996, p.32).

In *The Mansion*, the reader gets to know that Ike McCaslin was the former owner of Jason's store. As Gutting remarks, it is important to see that this store "passed from a man with close ties to farming and to the land to a townsman who […] is contemptuous of rural folk", since this fact "stresses the purely material ties Jason has to farmers and to country people in general" – for Jason despises small-town business and keeps distance to the customers (1992, pp.79, 80).

Yet the void caused by the vanishing of the plantation system was not only filled by mercantile enterprises initiated by representatives of the Old South [McCaslins, Compson] but, quite the contrary, it was most successfully filled by those business-minded Northerners who intruded Yoknapatawpha after the Civil War: the Snopeses. In this context, it is important to note that the Varner store is

Flem's point of entry into the unsuspecting community of Frenchmen's Bend. While working for the Varners as a clerk, Flem learns from his employer what it needs to make his way to the top. And thus, greedy and reckless as Flem is, he does not feel guilty at all when he makes shady offers to get his clients' money:

> Yet this man [Flem] who five months ago was riding eight miles back and forth to work on a plow mule […], was now not only sleeping in a rented bed and eating from a furnishable table like a drummer, he had also made a considerable cash loan, security and interest not specified, to a resident of the village, and before the last of the cotton was ginned it was already known that any sum between twenty-five cents and ten dollars could be borrowed from him at any time, if the borrower agreed to pay enough for the accommodations (HAM, pp.67, 68).

It becomes apparent that the store has prepared Flem very well for his later job as bank president of the former Sartoris bank. Taking Varner as an example, Flem uses the store to lend money to poor people who have to repay with unfairly high rates of interest. To show the effects of his doings, Flem's rise to power in Varner's store and in Frenchmen's Bend is given here briefly. Soon after Flem starts to work in the store, he takes over the supervision of the cotton gin from Jody who, in turn, returns to work as a clerk in the store (p.67). Thereafter, Flem helps Varner to settle yearly the accounts with the tenants (pp.67, 68), and deals in cattle successfully (p.68). Two months later, Flem builds a new blacksmith shop (p.73), which he sells to Varner only four months later while cutting a big profit out of it (p.74). One year later, Flem settles the yearly accounts without even Will Varner himself present (p.98). And at the end of the novel, consequently, Flem is not only in charge of the hamlet's blacksmith shop and cotton gin, but also of the Varner store itself (all paginations cited above refer to *The Hamlet*):

> Now it was not Jody Varner who would come leisurely to the store and give the clerk directions and instructions and leave him to carry them out; it was the ex-clerk who would enter the store, mounting the steps and jerking his head at the men on the gallery exactly as Will Varner himself would do, and enter the store, from which presently the sound of his voice would come, speaking with matter-of-fact succinctness to the bull-goaded bafflement of the man who once had been his employer and who still seemed not to know just exactly what had happened to him (HAM, p.98).

After Flem's move to Jefferson [as reported in *The Town*], the Varner store ceases to be a prominent public place in the Snopes trilogy. But Flem, however, is still interested in stores. This becomes clear in his very machinations to get the ownership of Wallstreet Panic's store by all means possible [see chapter 6.2.3].

In *The Town*, Faulkner contrasts Wallstreet Panic Snopes' [Wall] way to success without any wheeling and dealings with Flem's career based on criminal business methods. Unlike Flem, Wall, the "non-Snopes son of a non-Snopes" (TOW, p. 474), is a honest and hard-working character who establishes in Jefferson the first self-service grocery store built on the pattern "which the big chain grocery stores were to make nationwide in the purveying of food" (TOW, p.478). Like Flem, Wall starts working as a store clerk [grocery store]. When the old owner dies, Wall is allowed to use all the money his mother got from an oil company for his father's [Eck] death to buy this grocery store (p.474). After his marriage, he buys a second hand Model T Ford to deliver goods (p.476).

When Wall refuses to let Flem buy himself into his business, Flem tricks his cousin into overbuying his stock and Wall is suddenly desperately in need of money (p.477) [see chapter 6.2.3]. But Wall, however, saves his business and even expands his enterprise. As a result, he opens the first self-service grocery store in Jefferson (p.478) (all paginations cited above refer to *The Town*). Interestingly, Wall erects his business exactly there where once stood Flem's old restaurant and eradicates thus all traces of his cousin's first forays into the Jefferson society:

> […]; the street his store faced on made an L with the alley where the old Snopes restaurant had been so that the tent in which he had passed his first night in Jefferson was directly behind his store too; he either bought or rented that lot (there were more automobiles in Jefferson now) and made a parking lot and so taught the housewives of Jefferson to come to town and seek his bargains and carry them home themselves (TOW, p.478).

Wall's new store clearly marks the beginning of the modern age in Jefferson. Now, women are not only allowed to drive cars, even the shops were designed for their needs (bargains, parking lots). This is radically different from former times and shows the new authority and independence assumed by Jefferson's women.

Besides those stores discussed above, there are some other places of trade and economy in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha saga. Among them are, for instance, Montgomery Ward's 'photo atelier' [where he offers pictures of naked women] and Uncle Willy's store [see also chapters 6.1.3 and 6.3.2], where Gavin Stevens frequently meets Linda Snopes, for instance. Faulkner first employed the image of a store as a public location in his third novel, *Flags in the Dust,* where the image of a store is an integral part in his rendering of American small town life:

> The store was half grocery and confectionary and half restaurant. A number of customers stood about the cluttered but clean front section, with sandwiches and bottles of soda water, and the proprietor bobbed his head with flurried, slightly distrait affability above the counter to them. The rear half of the room was filled with tables at which a number of men and a woman or so, mostly country people, sat eating with awkward and solemn decorum. Next to this was the kitchen, filled with frying odors and the brittle hissing of it, where two negroes moved about like wraiths in a blue floating lethargy of smoke (p.129).

As this excerpt shows, stores are likewise liminal spaces where people of different races and social strata can commingle while pursuing personal interests or business affairs. Seen this way, a store does not separate the different races and classes but, quite the contrary, connects them with each other. Faulkner offers another vivid description of a small-town store in *Intruder in the Dust*, which also emphasizes the social function of such public places for the whole community:

> It was a Saturday afternoon three years ago at the crossroads store four miles from Edmond's place where at some time during Saturday afternoon every tenant and renter and freeholder white or black in the neighborhood would at least pass and usually stop, quite often even to buy something, the saddled trace-galled mules and horses tied among the willows and birches and sycamores in the trampled mud below the spring and their riders overflowing the store itself out onto the dusty banquette in front, standing or squatting on their heels drinking bottled sodapop and spitting tobacco and rolling without hurry cigarettes and striking deliberate matches to smoked-out pipes; […] (ITD, p.18).

In "Barn Burning" [1938], Faulkner shows how a country store is used as a makeshift court for a Justice of the Peace. The story opens with a description of a small country store, and Faulkner puts emphasis on the various smells within it:

> The store in which the Justice of the Peace's court was sitting smells of cheese. The boy [Sarty], crouched on his nail keg at the back of the crowded room, knew he smelled cheese, and more: from where he sat he could see the ranked shelves close-packed with the solid, squat, dynamic shapes of tin cans whose labels his stomach read, […]. He could not see the table where the Justice sat and before which his father and his father's enemy![…] stood, […] (CS, p.3)

Sarty is overwhelmed by the olfactory quality of the store. For him, this place is a store and not a courtroom. As Towner and Carothers note in this context, "a Justice of the Peace is a minor court official in charge of civil actions at the local level; the fact that this trial takes place in the town's general store indicates that the small town has no courthouse. The informality of the 'courtroom' does not mean that the proceedings are frivolous or the results nonbinding" (2006, p.6). Sarty's father has been accused of burning Mr. Harris' barn. Since there is no real proof that Snopes is really responsible for having burned the barn, the judge is legally forced to declare him innocent. But the crowd outside, however, thinks different about Abner, as Sarty learns when they have to leave the store:

> His father turned, and he followed the stiff black coat, […], followed the two backs now, since his older brother had appeared from somewhere in the crowd, […], chewing tobacco steadily, between the two lines of grim-faced men and out of the store and across the worn gallery and down the sagging steps and among the dogs and half-grown boys in the mild May dust, where as he passed a voice hissed: "Barn burner!" (CS, p.5).

A store as a place for a confrontation between two characters who are at loggerheads with each other is a motif also utilized in another Snopes story, "Mule in the Yard" [1934]. Here, I.O. Snopes tries to escape justice after his mule has set fire to Mrs. Hait's house: "By noon the house had burned to the ground. There was a farmer's supply store where Snopes could be usually found; more than one had made a point of finding him there by that time" (CS, p.257). Unlike the stores used in other writings, Faulkner neglects to render the farmer's supply store in "Mule in the Yard" in any detail. Due to the fact that the story is placed in "The Village" section of the *Collected Stories*, one can assume that the confrontation between Mrs. Hait and Snopes is set in Jason Compson's store.

Apart from all the stores mentioned above, there appear some more stores in Faulkner's works but which are only of minor significance in this discussion. For further information about Watt's store, Cain's store, Mrs. Rouncewell's flower shop, and Wilderman's department store consult Gutting's book (1992, pp.78-82).

To summarize this chapter: stores in Faulkner are chiefly places for social and commercial affairs. In this certain type of public house, racial and social boundaries become weaker and interaction and communication between the different races and classes are possible. Moreover, as the Varner store indicates, stores are closely linked to banks and farmers – as rendered both in Flem's rise to power from store clerk to bank president as well as in Varner's control of the Sartoris bank [since he uses the money he has earned with his store to become the biggest stockholder of the Sartoris bank]. Stores are the places where crops and cotton are traded and where sharecroppers are exploited. Since the owner of a store fixes the prices for cotton, he has virtually absolute control of his share-croppers. In view of these facts, stores can be seen as key symbolic elements for the community because they are often the locus of ordinary and extraordinary activities (house society principle three). Stores are also significant public places because they show how the Jefferson society undergoes a major social transformation (house society principle one): stores designate the shift from a plantation society towards a mercantile society with different kinds of shops, banks, and other commercial enterprises there [though still mainly in the cotton business]. Moreover, the appearance of more and more stores [like filling station shops et al] highlights the development of a middle class in the Jefferson society.

In addition, stores are likewise linked to windows because shop windows display the goods offered within the store. This aspect is of relevance in the short story "Uncle Willy" [see chapter 6.3.3] and in the novel *As I Lay Dying*, when Vardaman dreams of having a model railway he has seen in a shop window, "It was behind the window, red on the track, the track shining round and round. It made my heart hurt" (AILD, p.216). Furthermore, the Varner store is also linked to porches since this store is equipped with a gallery where are the male citizens of Frenchmen's Bend gather every day to have social interaction [see chapter 6.3.4].

### 6.2.2 The Courthouse and the Jail

Whereas stores chiefly serve social and commercial interests, Jefferson's courthouse and jail have to fulfill other significant civil tasks. They are visible icons of law and justice. Set in the middle of Jefferson's square, the courthouse is the "axis mundi" of Faulkner's literary terrain (Crane 1969, p.20). Kerr likewise emphasizes the centrality of the courthouse in Faulkner's fictional county. For this critic, the courthouse is not only the nucleus of the town, but also its symbol of civilized society because "without which there was no town" (1969, p.47):

> But above all, the courthouse; the center, the focus, the hub; sitting looming in the center of the county's circumference like a single cloud in its ring of horizon; [...]; musing, brooding, symbolic and ponderable, tall as cloud, solid as rock, dominating all: protector of the weak, judiciate and curb of the passions and lusts, repository and guardian of the aspirations and the hopes; [...] (RFN, p.35).

Yet what distinguishes the courthouse from all other buildings in the town is its vertical dimension. There is no other building in Jefferson that is as tall and big as the courthouse [save Sutpen's Hundred]. Since verticality evokes deep respect, the courthouse's height dwarfs its impressed visitors like a cathedral and makes it thus a symbol charged with the hopes and dreams of Jefferson's citizenry:

> [...], bigger than any because it was the sum of all and, being the sum of all, it must raise all of their hopes and aspirations level with its own aspirant and soaring cupola, so that, sweating and tireless and unflagging, they would look about at one another a little shyly, a little amazed, with something like humility too, as if they were realising, or were for a moment at least capable of believing, that men, all men, including themselves, were a little better, purer maybe even, than they had thought, expected, or even needed to be (RFN, p.37).

For Ruzicka, the courthouse is a "statement of the people of Jefferson, as Jefferson the community. [...] Its intention is to be the public enclosure of individual aspirations towards community" (1987, p.67). Ruzicka thus views the courthouse as a public structure that concretizes the hopes and dreams of all members of the community.

In 1863, a United States military force burned the town's square and business district. Though the courthouse caught fire, it has never ceased to exist:

> It didn't escape: it simply survived: harder than axes, tougher than fire, more fixed than dynamite; encircled by the tumbled and blackened ruins of lesser walls, it still stood, even the topless smoke-stained columns, gutted of course and roofless, but immune, […], so that all they had to do (it took nine years to build; they needed twenty-five to restore it) was put in new floors for the two storeys and a new roof, and this time with a cupola with a four-faced clock and a bell to strike the hours and ring alarms; (RFN, p.40).

Although badly damaged in the Civil War, the courthouse has "survived" and henceforth it serves as a constant reminder of an era long since gone: "it was the symbol: the County and the City" (RFN, p.204). On the other hand, it is also a symbol of a legal system that supported slavery. Unlike most houses in Jefferson, the courthouse is built of brick – which explains why the fire did not consume it. The courthouse is therefore a token of Jefferson's history for it contains, in Henry James' phrase, 'the sense of the past' [see p. 44]. Since the time of its rebuilding in the aftermath of the Civil War, the courthouse has defied any kind of changes or modernizations – thereby keeping intact the very spirit of the Old South itself,

> […]: every few years the county fathers, […], would instigate a movement to tear it down and erect a new modern one, but someone would at the last moment defeat them; they will try it again of course and be defeated perhaps once again or even maybe twice again, but no more than that. Because its fate is to stand in the hinterland of America: its doom is its longevity; like a man, its simple age is its own reproach, and after the hundred years, will become unbearable (RFN, p.41).

Although the courthouse serves as a symbol of justice [bent to the needs of a slave holding society], not every single character charged with a crime will attain justice there. Lee Goodwin, for instance, is an innocent character to whom justice is denied. In the courthouse, Temple Drake accuses Lee for crimes actually committed by Popeye. As a consequence, Goodwin is innocently sentenced and later lynched by a wild mob. As Vickery remarks: "the courthouse becomes […] a battleground where justice can be defeated by law, where a Goodwin can be condemned and a Temple offered the sympathies of the Court" (1964, p.116).

However, the courthouse is a public structure open to the community in order to gather there and to experience the legal system at work. This becomes apparent in Faulkner's rendering of the courtroom scene in *Sanctuary*, where the common people of Jefferson are gathered to witness the trial of Lee Goodwin:

> The hum of [the audience's] voices and movements came back upon the steady draft which blew through the door. The air entered the open windows and blew over the heads and back to Horace in the door, laden with smells of tobacco and stale sweat and the earth and with that unmistakable odor of courtrooms; that musty odor of spent lusts and greeds and bickerings and bitterness, and withal a certain clumsy stability in lieu of anything better (SAN, p.281).

The courthouse as a place for the community is also apparent in "Smoke", the first story of Faulkner's collection of mystery tales, *Knight's Gambit*. Although a great deal of the action takes place within the courthouse, the courthouse itself is not described in the story. Instead, Faulkner shows the emotions of the community there while watching Gavin Stevens at work. Thus, he renders the courthouse as a place for excitement and distraction otherwise not available in the village / town:

> For some time after that [Steven's disclosure that Anselm is not the murderer of his father] we who watched and listened dwelt in anti-climax, in a dreamlike state in which we seemed to know beforehand what was going to happen, aware at the same time that it didn't matter because we should soon wake. It was as though we were outside of time, watching events from outside; still outside of and beyond time since that first instant when we looked at Anselm as though we had never seen him before (KG, pp. 21, 22).

A necessary supplement to the courthouse is the Jefferson jail where all the people charged with a crime are kept like, for example, Mink Snopes [Snopes Trilogy], Lee Goodwin [*Sanctuary*], Lucas Beauchamp [*Intruder in the Dust*] and Joe Christmas [*Light in August*]. For Vickery, the jail is a "visible symbol of the assumption that the virtuous can be separated from the wicked and that the latter can be purged of their wickedness by a specific kind and degree of punishment" (1964, p.117). In *Requiem for a Nun*, Faulkner's attempt to establish a sense of coherence in the tangled history of his Yoknapatawpha saga, the author offers the following description of the Jefferson jail and its history,

> […] not only was the courthouse finished, but the jail too: not a new jail of course but the old one veneered over with brick, into two storeys, with white trim and iron barred-windows: only its face lifted, because behind the veneer were still the old ineradicable bones, the old ineradicable remembering: the old logs immured intact and lightless between the tiered symmetric bricks and the whitewashed plaster, immune now even to having to look, see, watch that new time […] (RFN, pp.193).

Whereas the courthouse was built as a completely new structure, the modern jail was merely a bettered version of the old prison – the people simply superimposed a new construction on the very structure of the old edifice. Moreover, this excerpt also reveals a striking parallel between the jail and the courthouse for both of these houses are painted with whitewash. Since the color white is expressive of purity and cleanliness, both the courthouse and the jail give the promise to provide honest interpretation of the law – which means, of course, a white man's honest and fair interpretation of the law. Since the order of the Old South based on the principle of patriarchy, double standards of law for the different sexes and races abound. Seen this way, the promise of administering justice is rather an ideal than reality. On a metaphorical plane, then, whitewash covers the crimes perpetrated in the name of white man's law. It is worthy to note, that many plantation houses and mansions are whitewashed, too. This also indicates that a white covering is supposed to wash away the sins committed by the inhabitants of these buildings.

Unlike the courthouse, which "survived" a fire during the Civil War, the jail "escaped" the flames. This piece of information reveals that the jail occupies a location somehow apart from the town square:

> […]; that night the town was occupied by Federal troops; two nights later, it was on fire (the Square, the stores and shops and the professional offices), gutted (the courthouse too), the blackened jagged topless jumbles of brick wall enclosing like a ruined jaw the blackened shell of the court-house between its two rows of topless columns, which (the columns) were only blackened and stained, being tougher than fire: but not the jail, it escaped, untouched, insulated by its windless backwater from fire; […] (RFN, p.200).

For Gutting, the remote location of the jail "expresses the citizens' wish to banish the negative aspects of the human community from […] eye-sight" (1992, p.67).

In his essay "Children of the Dark House", Polk refers to the origins of the jail and the courthouse. According to this critic, the courthouse was erected on the site where once stood the first Jefferson jail. Polk therefore considers the jail as "the mother/progenitor of the courthouse", without which there would be no civilization in Jefferson (1989, p.63). Moreover, Polk also highlights the public's different esteem of these buildings:

> The idea for the courthouse is simultaneous with their [the citizens] desire to create a town; at the official founding of Jefferson, then, the jail and the courthouse are in a single structure, separated only by a single wall. As the settlers and then the later arrivals build a succession of courthouses worthy to embody their dreams and aspirations, they gradually begin to avoid the jail; they shun it for its symbolic potency as a place of punishment, its constant reminder of the factor in human nature that makes jails necessary. Jefferson repudiates the jail so completely that it separates the courthouse building from it; in building a new courthouse, they move not just the new building but the entire town to a new location, leaving the old jail building 'not even on a side-street but on an alley' (RFN, p.192) where most citizens would not have to pass it during a normal day. During the subsequent history of Jefferson the settlers constantly rebuild and expand the courthouse building; they leave the jail building alone; they merely whitewash it over. Through the years, it retains its symbolic relationship to something, whatever it is, that the Jefferson folk wants, need, to forget (1998, pp.62, 63).

Whereas the courthouse is supposed to represent justice and security, the jail, by contrast, is a symbol for the immorality and badness inherent in a human being. As an emblem of shame, the jail has to be located somewhere apart from the town's center to avoid making the honorable citizens be ashamed of the black sheep amongst them in their community. In his fourteenth novel, *Intruder in the Dust*, Faulkner offers additional information about the exterior design of the jail:

> It was of brick, square, proportioned, with four brick columns in shallow basrelief across the front and even a brick cornice under the eaves because it was old, built in a time when people took time to build even jails with grace and care […]. In fact it still looked like a residence with its balustraded wooden gallery stretching across the front of the lower floor. But above that the brick wall was windowless except for the single tall crossbarred rectangle […] (ITD, pp.49, 51).

The "crossbarred rectangle" is of course the window behind which Mink Snopes vainly waits for his cousin Flem to come and get him out. For Gavin Stevens, however, the jail itself is a far better record of the town's history than any other records and documents kept in the courthouse:

> […] if you would peruse in unbroken – ay, overlapping – continuity the history of a community, look not in the church registers and the courthouse records, but beneath the successive layers of calcimine and creosote and whitewash on the walls of the jail, since only in that forcible carceration does man find the idleness in which to compose, in the gross and simple terms of his gross and simple lusts and yearnings, the gross and simple recapitulations of his gross and simple heart; […], filled not only with its mutations and change from a halting-place: to a community: to a settlement: to a village: to a town, but with the shapes and motions, the gestures of passion and hope and travail and endurance, of the men and women and children in their successive overlapping generations […] (RFN, p.184).

Vickery also focuses on the significance of this aspect in her analysis of the jail:

> Paradoxically, however, the jail is also the one place which isolates the individual from the masses, thereby returning him to self-awareness, stripping him of all pretense and leaving him at last face to face with his own humanity. Thus, it is in this building that the continuity of human nature through all change and vicissitude is stressed. It is on its window that a scrawl suddenly brings to life the old dead loves and fears and hopes of a time long past. The jail is the record of the town, […] (1964, p.117).

The jail may offer a chronicle of the town, but it fails to be a safe place for those who are charged with a crime or who have been proved guilty such as Lee Goodwin or Lucas Beauchamp. In the end, the jail – like the courthouse – is unable to protect the weak and to ensure justice because Lee Goodwin is taken out of his prison cell by a rioting mob that burns him alive in the streets of Jefferson [see also chapter 6.3.3].

In "That Evening Sun", Faulkner once again uses the image of the Jefferson jail to render the inequality of power between the different races and the injustice done to one of the weakest member of the community: the black laundress and prostitute Nancy. When she is arrested and taken to jail [because of being drunk

or taking drugs], Nancy passes one of her clients, Baptist deacon Stovall, and asks him to pay her for sexual services rendered previously. Mr. Stovall, of course, beats her and kicks out several of her teeth without the least fear of recrimination. In the jail, then, Nancy attempts suicide, but the jailer manages to 'rescue' her:

> That was how she lost her teeth, and all that day they told about Nancy and Mr. Stovall, and all that night the ones that passed the jail could hear Nancy singing and yelling. They could see her hands holding to the window bars, and a lot of them stopped along the fence, listening to her and to the jailer trying to make her stop. She didn't shut up until almost daylight, when the jailer began to hear a bumping and scraping upstairs and he went up there and found Nancy hanging from the window bar. […]
>
> The jailer cut her down and revived her; then he beat her, whipped her. She had hung herself with her dress (CS, p.291).

Nancy is not only arrested for a crime a white man would not be punished for; quite the contrary, she also is brutalized after her attempt to commit suicide. For Skei, Nancy's unsuccessful suicide attempt is accounted for in two ways: "She only had her dress to hang herself in, and, with untied hands, she could not make herself let go of the window ledge. She wants to but she clings to life" (1999, p.185). Like Lee Goodwin, Nancy is likewise denied fair treatment in jail.

In "Pantaloon in Black", Faulkner illustrates how another black character, Rider, virtually tries to commit suicide in the Jefferson jail. After having killed a white man in a crap-game, Rider gets arrested and he is kept in the Jefferson jail. Outside the jail, a chain gang has gathered to lynch him. Rider, however, does not care for his life. He wants to be reunited with his deceased wife, and therefore he removes the protecting steel door that separates him from the mob:

> So he [the jailer] come on back downstairs and pretty soon the chain gang come in and he thought things had settled down for a while when all of a sudden he begun to hear the yelling, not howling: yelling, though there wasn't no words in it, and he grabbed his pistol and run back upstairs and into the room where the chain gang was, where he could see through the door bars into the cell where that nigger [Rider] had done tore that iron cot clean out of the floor it was bolted to and was standing in the middle of the cell, holding the cot over his head like it was a baby's cradle, yelling, […], and throws the cot against the wall and comes and grabs holt of that steel door and rips it out of the

> wall – bricks, hinges and all – and walks out into the big room, toting the door the door over his head as if it were a gauze wire window screen, saying ‘It’s awright. Ah ain’t trying to git away’ (US, pp.254-255).

Though seeking death as an escape, but surviving the chain gangs attempts to kill him, Rider learns that he still has to cope with grief and pain. The memories of his lost wife will therefore still torment his thinking: “Hit look lack Ah just can’t quit thinking. Look lack Ah just can’t quit” (US, p.255).

Even though the Jefferson jail is supposed to be a secure place for those who have committed a crime [and to keep these people away from the innocent citizenry], it sometimes fails to serve this purpose. Especially for blacks and poor whites, the jail ceases to be a place for a fair punishment. Seen this way, the jail is always a reminder that there are double standards of law and justice within the Jefferson community for the different sexes and races.

Since both the courthouse and the jail represent the community’s law and order system, these buildings are charged with symbolic meaning and reverence. Even more than mansions, plantation houses, stores, and banks, these two edifices are particularly expressive of González-Ruibal’s third criterion defining a house-based society in the sense of Lévi-Strauss’ thesis [“houses must be key symbolic elements in the community at issue” (see also p. 42)].

### 6.2.3 Banks

Like stores, banks form another part of Yoknapatawpha County's economic system. As centers of economy and commerce, banks are public places that show the "social forces at work in the development of the fictional county seat" (Gutting 1992, p.82), as will be demonstrated in the following discussion.

One significant bank in the Yoknapatawpha canon is the old "Merchants' and Farmers' Bank" founded by Bayard Sartoris II. Being a business that keeps and lends money, Sartoris' bank is a powerful institution in Jefferson that holds a strong influence on the economic affairs of the citizenry. Faulkner introduced the "Merchants' and Farmers' Bank" in *Flags in the Dust*. In his last years as its bank president, Bayard Sartoris' work is hardly characterized by any important business affairs at all. Instead, Faulkner's rendering of Sartoris' director's room indicates that the old man spends most of his days in rather comfortable idleness:

> Old Bayard's office was also the director's room. It was a large room containing a long table aligned with chairs, and a tall cabinet in which blank banking forms were kept, and old Bayard's roll-top desk and swivel chair, and a sofa on which he napped occasionally in the hot afternoons. His desk, like the one at home, was cluttered with an astonishing variety of objects which had no relation to the banking business whatever, and the mantel above the fireplace bore yet more objects of an agricultural nature, as well as a dusty assortment of pipes and three or four jars of tobacco which furnished solace for all the banking force and for a respectable portion of the bank's pipe-smoking clientele (FID, p.83).

Faulkner's portrayal of Bayard's office evokes a somewhat crude impression of a bank president's office room since this room rather reflects Bayard's predilection for agricultural matters than being the director of his own bank – as the presence of various agricultural objects scattered all over this place bring to light. In this context, Gutting notes that all those scattered objects in Bayard's office contribute to an atmosphere which gives the office "homelike attributes" to create "the impression of a private room rather than that of a plain business" (1992, p.83). As a consequence, the bank appears as a locale where Bayard's "personal ethics and values are at home, a place he can identify himself with" (Gutting 1992, p.84).

Although Bayard Sartoris appears to be a rather sympathetic bank director who shares communal ties, he is nevertheless a crook who has used the bank for his very own economic purposes. According to Gavin Stevens, “Colonel Sartoris had robbed [the bank] for twelve years yet still contrived to die and be buried in the odor of unimpugnable rectitude”, while Manfred de Spain had to “cover up the Colonel’s thievery in order to have any bank to loot himself” (TOW, p.579).

After Bayard Sartoris had died in a car crash, Manfred de Spain became the next president of the bank, followed by Flem Snopes. For Flem, the bank has always been the focal point of all of his aspirations and dreams – and becoming its president is the result of all his legal actions and illegal machinations. Except for his columned mansion, there is no other building in Jefferson that is better able to highlight Flem’s power, control, and influence on the town. Flem’s gradual rise to power in the Sartoris’ bank reflects once again the very kind of machinations and exploitations he has learned from Will Varner. Using money he has earned from some wheeling and dealings with clients’ in the store, Flem soon buys stock of the Sartoris bank in order to become its vice president when the time is right:

> So Flem was the first actual living vice president of a bank we had ever seen to notice. We heard he had fallen heir to the vice presidency when Manfred de Spain moved up his notch, and we knew why: Uncle Billy Varner’s stock plus the odds and ends which (we now learned) Flem himself had been picking up here and there for some time, plus Manfred de Spain himself (TOW, p.468).

It was thus the combined power of Varner and Flem’s stock that enabled Flem to work in the bank. It is worthy to note, at that point, that Varner’s chief interest in making Flem the vice president of the bank is to have him as a “voting proxy to save him a trip to the town” (TOW, p.477), and surely not to set the stage for his later rise to bank presidency. When he begins working as vice president there, Flem spends most of his time “not in the back office where Colonel Sartoris had used to sit and where Manfred de Spain sat now, but in the lobby” (TOW, pp.468, 469), from where he watches the clients and thus learns the bank business:

> […] all he – Snopes – needed to learn now was how to write out a note so that the fellow borrowing the money couldn’t even read when

> it was due, let alone the rate of interest, like Colonel Sartoris could write one (the tale, the legend was that once the colonel wrote out a note for a country-man customer, a farmer, who took the note and looked at it, then handed it back to the colonel and said, "What does it say, Colonel? I cant read it," whereupon the colonel took it in his turn, looked at it, turned it upside down and looked at it, then tore it in two and threw it in the waste basket and said, "Be damned if I can either, Tom. We'll try another one."), then he – Snopes – would know all there was to learn about banking in Jefferson, […] (TOW, p.470).

In the bank, Flem, "who had a vocabulary of two words, one being No and the other Foreclosure" (MAN, p.871), virtually reiterates what he has done in the Varner store before. He lends money to customers who cannot pay it back or who cannot pay it back in due time. As a result, the bank will legally take possession of a debtor's property [e.g. stock, land, or housing] if he cannot repay his debts. Thus the bank gets richer and richer whereas the debtors lose everything they own.

In his never ceasing attempts to take a personal advantage out of every business situation, Flem also uses the financial institution he works for as a means to accomplish his own schemes. This becomes particularly clear in the way Flem tries to seize control and ownership of Wallstreet Panic [Wall] Snopes' store:

> […] Flem had tried again to buy into Wallstreet's business, save him with a personal private loan before he, as a director, blocked the loan from the bank. Because we thought we saw it all now; all we seemed to have missed was, what hold he could have had over the drummer to compel him to persuade Wallstreet to overbuy, and over the wholesale house in St. Louis to persuade it to accept the sale – very likely the same sign or hoodoo-mark he planned to use on the other bank, the Bank of Jefferson, to prevent them lending Wallstreet money after Colonel Sartoris' bank declined (TOW, p.477).

As Gavin Stevens exhibits, Flem uses his position as vice president to influence various individuals and institutions just for the sake of making Wall overbuy his stock and to render him thus temporarily unable to pay his debts. And, due to Flem's interventions, Wall will get no loan in whole of Jefferson and seems to be dependent on his cousin. But Flem's offer to save Wall with a personal loan is, of course, a trick to get hold of his business. In the end, Flem's plan goes awry because Ratliff lends Wall the money he needs to save his business (TOW, p.478).

After this incident, the next important step in Flem's way to the top is his attempt to reduce the other stockholders' influence in the bank. This is why Flem transfers his money to the "rival bank, the old bank of Jefferson" (TOW, p.472):

> At last we knew why he had moved his money. It was as a bait. Not putting it into the other bank, the old Bank of Jefferson, as the bait, but for the people of Jefferson and Yoknapatawpha County to find out that he had withdrawn his money from the bank of which he himself was vice president, and put it somewhere else (TOW, p.576).

Transferring his account from his own bank to the Bank of Jefferson is Flem's effort to shatter the other stockholder's confidence in both the financial strength and security of the old Sartoris bank. Consequently, some stockholders withdraw their money and sell their stocks – which offers Flem the possibility to buy their stock in turn and to empower thus his influence in the Sartoris bank. As Ratliff remarks, "what other reason was there […] to line up enough voting stock, figure and connive and finagle and swap and trade […] to get himself elected president [of it] […]" (TOW, p.579). Since all he needs to become bank president is to have enough voting power to evict de Spain from the bank, Flem carefully conceives of a plan to make Varner use his stock!against de Spain. If Flem succeeds and de Spain resigns from presidency, he will not only become the new bank president, but he will also be avenged since de Spain has a sexual relationship with Flem's wife for quite a long time. Thus Flem yearns to take "vengeance and revenge on the man who had presented him with the badge of his championship; vengeance and revenge on the man who had not merely violated his home but outraged it – the home which in all good faith he had tried to establish around a woman already irrevocably soiled and damaged in the world's […] sight" (TOW, p.583). Flem now comprehends that he has to use his own wife, Eula, to make his dream come true, and he brings into play Eula's will [guaranteeing Flem whatever Linda inherits from her mother] to exert pressure on his father-in-law to remove de Spain as president of the Sartoris bank. Yet what outrages Varner the most is not his daughter's eighteen-year affair with de Spain [of which he seems to have been aware of] but, instead, the fact that Flem has become the beneficiary of Eula's will. Since this document undermines all of Varner's efforts to cut Flem out of his

will [for Varner hates and fears Flem Snopes (TOW, p.588)], Varner is forced to give his consent to Flem's presidency in exchange for getting hold of Eula's will, again. In the end, there is nothing else that Varner can do save to remove de Spain from his job and to install Flem as the new bank president.

Flem's mistreatment of his wife not only indicates his poor esteem of Eula [and of other people in general], but it is also mirrors Will Varner's low opinion of his own daughter as well, since he has given nothing else than the decayed Old Frenchman's Place as a dowry to her marriage with Flem: "a plantation of barely accessible worn-out land containing the weed-choked ruins of a formal garden and the remains […] of a columned colonial house – a property so worthless that Will Varner gave it away" (TOW, p.583). In offering his son-in-law a worthless estate of which he had never find a way to make money out of, Varner makes clear how little he thinks about the marriage in general and his daughter in particular. Thus, it appears as if Eula is rather a commodity than a respected human being.

After Flem's disclosure of his wife's liaison with Major de Spain, Eula has to face the consequences of this action and commits suicide, whereupon Manfred de Spain leaves the town in mourning. This offers Flem the chance to buy de Spain's stock and his mansion [though he buys the latter in secret] (TOW, p.643).

After having shown who is directly [and indirectly] in charge of the Sartoris bank, it is now appropriate to shed some light upon its clients. Although there are some rich clients, one can assume that the majority of its clientèle are those "one-gallused share-cropper[s] in the county whose sole cash value was the October or November sale of the single bale of cotton which was [their] tithe of this year's work" (TOW, p. 590), as Gavin!Stevens remarks.

Elsewhere in *The Town*, Stevens goes on to say that the gross of its clients belongs to that "nethermost stratum of unfutured, barely solvent one-bale farmers which pervaded, covered thinly the whole county and on which in fact the entire cotton economy of the county was founded and supported" (TOW, p.591). Stevens' statement points directly to the close connection between cotton farmers on the one hand and banking institutions on the other hand. In stores, cotton is turned into money and rich characters like Will Varner or the McCaslins invest their profits in banks to make even more money while poor tenant farmers, by

contrast, bring the little money they have to banks in order to pay their debts or mortgages on houses, stock, or land. Seen this way, the banks in Yoknapatawpha are just another part of an economic system that is based on the exploitation of the lowest social stratum: the landless sharecroppers and land-owning yeoman.

In addition to that, it is striking that there occur no females in the banks of Jefferson whereas blacks have bank accounts. This becomes apparent in "The Fire and the Hearth", the second story of *Go Down, Moses*, where one is told that Lucas Beauchamp already has "more money in the bank now than he would ever spend, more than Carothers Edmonds himself, provided a man believed Carothers Edmonds when he tried to draw anything extra in the way of cash or supplies from the commissary" (GDM, p. 34). Edmonds' remark is, of course, ironic but, nevertheless, Lucas Beauchamp is indeed well off. As Edmonds says, Lucas has "over three thousand dollars in the bank" (GDM, p. 77). However, it did not go without saying that blacks could open up bank accounts, as the following discussion between Lucas Beauchamp and Isaac McCaslin indicates:

> But what followed most of the town of Jefferson knew, so that the anecdote not only took its place in the Edmonds family annals, but in the minor annals of the town too: – how the white and the negro cousins went side by side to the bank that morning and Lucas said, "Wait. It's a heap of money."
> "It's too much", the white man said. "Too much to keep hidden under a break in a hearth. Let me keep it for you. Let me keep it."
> "Wait," Lucas said. "Will the bank keep it for a black man same as for a white?"
> "Yes," the white man said. "I will ask them to."
> "How can I get it back?" Lucas said. The white man explained about the check. "All right," Lucas said. They stood side by side at the window while the white man had the account transferred and the new pass-book filled out; again Lucas said "Wait" and then they stood side by side at the ink-splashed wooden shelf while Lucas wrote out the check, writing it steadily under the white man's direction in the cramped though quite legible hand […]. Then they stood again at the grille while the teller cashed the check and Lucas, still blocking the single window, counted the money tediously and deliberately through twice and pushed it back to the teller beyond the grille. "Now you can put it back," he said. "And gimme my paper" (GDM, pp.105, 106).

Yet Lucas, however, is the only black character throughout all of Faulkner's fiction who is actually shown being inside a bank. His query whether the bank will keep his money in the same way as for a white man is therefore expressive of his doubts about a black man's equal and just treatment in a white man's bank. In addition, there is Simon in *Flags in the Dust / Sartoris*, a Sartoris servant and presumably the illegitimate son of Colonel Sartoris IV, who drives Bayard in a carriage to and fro his bank every single day, but who is never shown entering that building. In the light of this, one can assume that Lucas is rather an exception to the rule and that banks also segregated between the races [like churches did].

As mentioned above, women are never shown as clients in a Jefferson bank. This observation is in concord with then contemporary female rights in the USA. Considering the fact that American women were deprived of countless rights during the 19th and 20th century, one can assume that female Yoknapatawphians may have not been allowed to open up their own bank accounts or to participate in their husband's money affairs. In this respect, banks are also instrumental in establishing and maintaining a double standard of laws for males and females.

Although Faulkner uses the Sartoris bank in the Snopes trilogy with no lack of coherence, the image of the very same bank appears in some of his other novels rather arbitrarily. As a result of this, the history of the "Merchants' and Farmers' Bank" is inconsistent. In *The Sound and the Fury*, for instance, Jason Compson discloses that Sartoris' bank had failed. As Jason goes into the old opera house in April 1928, "where somebody had stored a lot of papers and junk out of the old Merchants' and Farmers' Bank when it failed" (SF, 135), he is able to find a blank check drawn on a Saint Louis bank stored in the old building. Yet in the Snopes trilogy, on the other hand, there is no suggestion that the Sartoris' bank has ever failed. Moreover, Flem's rise to bank presidency occurred in 1927 [as indicated by the date of Eula's death on her gravestone (TOW, p.657)], and he remains its bank director until his death in 1946.

In this respect, one can only surmise that in his early fiction, however, Faulkner seems to have had no intentions of using this bank as a setting, again. Yet when Faulkner started to work on the Snopes trilogy, he somehow became conscious of the full potential of this image for the further development of Flem

Snopes and his way to the top. Therefore, confusing as such inconsistencies may be, they are nevertheless an expression of Faulkner's growing artistic awareness of how to create and enlarge the environs of his fictional world.

This chapter solely focuses upon the Sartoris bank and omits a discussion of the "Bank of Jefferson" since it does not occur as an important public space of action in the Yoknapatawpha cycle. For further information about this bank consult Gutting's study *Yoknapatawpha* (1992, pp.85, 86).

To summarize this chapter briefly, the Snopes trilogy illustrates very well that banks have become the new power structures of Faulkner's fictional county. Banks are no social institutions but private businesses that keep and lend money for the sole purpose of maximizing the owner or owners' profit. Therefore, banks actively take part in Yoknapatawpha's economic system and radically change property conditions since they are entitled to a claim of ownership of a debtor's property if he cannot repay his debts or mortgages in due time. Like stores, banks occupy an important position within the cotton business. They are finally the places where all the money gained in the cotton industry goes. And, as seen in *Go Down, Moses*, banks lend money to poor sharecroppers who have to repay each fall after the cotton is in their debts along with a charge for the borrowed money although they hardly earn enough to support their families with basic needs like food, clothes, or decent housing. As a result, the debtors lose all their belongings and go the poorhouse while banks get richer and richer. Seen this way, banks are thus instrumental in performing a major social transformation towards a more hierarchical organization (house society principle one). Yet, at the same time, banks also transform Yoknapatawpha from an agricultural society into a commercial service industry society.

In addition to that, banks are also key symbolic elements in the Jefferson community since they have symbolic meanings [financial and economic power] (house society principle three).

### 6.2.4 Barbershops

In "Dry September" and "Hair", both written in 1930, Faulkner employs a barbershop as a setting for exchanging male gossip. "Dry September" opens in media res and focuses upon several male villagers being gathered in a barbershop where they are debating a rumor concerning Minnie Cooper and Will Mayes:

> Through the bloody September twilight, aftermath of sixty-two rainless days, it had gone like a fire in dry grass – the rumor, the story, whatever it was. Something about Miss Minnie Cooper and a Negro. Attacked, insulted, frightened: none of them, gathered in the barber shop on that Saturday evening where the ceiling fan stirred, without refreshing it, the vitiated air, sending back upon them, in recurrent surges of stale pomade and lotion, their own stale breath and odors, knew exactly what had happened (CS, p.169).

As seen in his description of the country store in "Barn Burning", Faulkner once again stresses the olfactory dimension of one of his public houses. As shown in the opening paragraph, the odors emitted by the sweating clients and their stale breaths contribute to the "flat and dead air" inside the barbershop (CS, p.173). The vitiated air inside the barbershop not only indicates the spiritual death of the clients who discuss the lynching of a black man, this dead air also foreshadows the approaching death of Will Mayes. It is important to note that only *white* male villagers frequent this barbershop. Thus it is not surprising that the lynch mob finds its origins there for it seems to need a white male environment to generate a climate of violence and hatred necessary for the killing of an innocent black man.

In "Hair", as stated above, Faulkner not only uses the barbershop again as a place for small town gossip but he also employs the same barber, Hawkshaw [who tries to oppose McLendon in "Dry September"], once again. "Hair" is about Hawkshaw and his [incestuous relationship] with Susan Reed [his daughter], as observed by his inquisitive colleagues Matt and Maxey in the barbershop.

For Hawkshaw, the barbershop is the only place where he can get in touch with the daughter of his deceased wife, while his colleagues all the while wonder why he is so friendly to just one of his clients:

> Maxey said him and Matt would not have to look at the clock at all to tell when five minutes to eight and to three o' clock came, because they could tell by Hawkshaw. It was like he would kind of drift to the window without watching himself do it, and be looking out about the time for the school children to begin to pass. When she [Susan] would come to the shop for a haircut, Hawkshaw would give her two or three of those peppermints where he would give the other children just one, Maxey told me. […]
>
> Anyway, Matt told me about how Hawkshaw gave her a present every Christmas, even after she got to be a big girl. She still came to him, to his chair, and him watching her every morning and afternoon when she passed to and from school (CS, pp.132, 133).

The narrator has been speculating about Hawkshaw's long-term fascination with Susan Reed for some twenty-five years without coming to any results. At the end of the story, however, the narrator is therefore almost shocked when he is told that Hawkshaw has left the town along with Susan – as his new wife: "On the night Hawkshaw came back from his last vacation, they were married. He took her with him this time" (CS, p.148).

Since many stories in "The Village" section highlight conflicts between the Jefferson community and outsiders, "Hair" is no exception to this rule and likewise focuses on a protagonist in conflict with his society. Yet until the very end of the story, Hawkshaw remains an enigmatic character who lives isolated from the community. Thus he is the perfect target for small town gossip. Although he works in a place that connects him tightly with his community, he is never able or willing to become a member of the Jefferson society. It is thus not surprising that Faulkner once again employed a barbershop setting in order to render an inquisitive narrator's endeavors to unravel the mysteries of a strange outsider.

Faulkner again uses the image of a barbershop in "Death Drag" [1930]. In this short story, some villagers are gathered in the barbershop to hear Captain Warren telling them about the lives and deeds of the stunt aviators (CS, p.193). Unlike "Dry September" and "Hair", the barbershop setting in "Death Drag" is of no further relevance in the discussion of this type of public house.

Like banks, barbershops are instrumental in keeping the principle of racial segregation. They seem to be white male spaces that offer distraction but they differ from stores where even women and blacks are allowed to be present.

### 6.2.5 Churches

Among Faulkner's representation of public houses, churches also occupy a prominent position because they are public spaces where every citizen regardless of his or her race, sex, or class is able to pursue religious beliefs. As Elizabeth Kerr points out in her analysis of organized religion in the Old South:

> The church in the South is the bulwark of the paternalistic concepts upon which the social institutions are founded and is a force of reactionary conservatism. As it was in the days of slavery, when Negroes were taught that patience and submission were their Christian duty, the church still uses religion, […] [as a means to hold control over the black population] by negating the value of physical welfare in this world (1969, p.173).

In the light of this, a church was thus emblematic of white man's control of the black race since the blacks were taught in churches to obey white man's rules. In addition to that, the Episcopal church of Jefferson with a gold cross atop its spire not only tolerated slave work but it was also built by black slaves, "there is a small Episcopal church in Jefferson, the oldest extant building in town (it was built by slaves […])" (TOW, p.614). As Gutting notes in this context, "Faulkner's literary treatment of institutionalized religion thus critically points out the negative aspects inherent in the ethical system preserved by the community of 20th century Jefferson. Throughout his work, the author criticizes and lays bare the stern moral and ethical patterns of dogmatic religion in the South" (1992, p.88).

In *The Town*, the reader is told that both the Episcopal and Presbyterian were the oldest congregations in Jefferson. In 20th century Jefferson, by contrast, Baptists and Methodists gained more significance until they finally "usurped and dispossessed" the former congregations (TOW, p.614). Kerr's analysis shows that Baptists and Methodists not only have become the most important congregations in Yoknapatawpha County but also in the whole South, as well. Moreover, this critic likewise points out that the "Baptists are not only the most numerous in Mississippi but [also] the most bitterly attacked by Faulkner" (1969, p.178). This becomes clear in some of Faulkner's statements given in interviews with students held at the University of Virginia. In *Faulkner at the University*, the author states

that Southern Baptists are bucolic and provincial and he questions whether these people believe in God at all: "I think [being Southern Baptist] is an emotional condition that has nothing to do with God […]" (FIU, p.173, 189). However, Faulkner's sympathy is rather with the Episcopal church. For one thing, churches like the Episcopal allow more "freedom of expression" and, on the other hand, the "congregation are more receptive to liberal views" (Kerr 1969, p.181). Faulkner's sympathy with the Episcopal also surfaces if one considers which congregation some of his characters do belong to. According to Kerr, Faulkner's "least fanatic characters are Episcopalians: Granny Millard, presumably the Sartorises, Gavin Stevens, and the Mallisons", while "Methodists seem most prominent in Frenchman's Bend" like the Varners, for instance (1969, p.179, 180). Flem Snopes, by contrast, is a Baptist. For a further account of Faulkner's stance towards churches and institutionalized religion see Kerr's *Yoknapatawpha* (1969, pp. 173-185).

Unlike Faulkner's rendering of the religion of the white population, the religion of the black population is presented rather sympathetically in his works. This becomes apparent in *The Sound and the Fury*, when Dilsey in chapter four of the book attends an Easter service in a primitive Negro church. Faulkner's portrayal of this church is once again illustrative of the blacks' miserable poverty. Moreover, his use of folk architecture to render the primitive church is in concord with his characteristic portrayal of black life and culture as demonstrated, for instance, in his representation of Negro cabins – as the following text shows:

> The road rose again, to a scene like a painted backdrop. Notched into a cut of red clay crowned with oaks the road appeared to stop short off, like a cut ribbon. Beside it a weathered church lifted its crazy steeple like a painted church, and the whole scene was as flat and without perspective as a painted cardboard set upon the ultimate edge of the flat earth, against the windy sunlight of space and April and a midmorning filled with bells. Toward the church they thronged with slow sabbath deliberation, the women and children went on in, the men stopped outside and talked in quiet groups until the bell ceased ringing. Then they [Dilsey and Benjy] too entered.
>
> The church had been decorated, with sparse flowers from kitchen gardens and hedgerows, and with streamers of colored crepe paper. Above the pulpit hung a battered Christmas bell, the accordion sort that collapses. The pulpit was empty, though the choir was already in place, fanning themselves although it was not warm (SF, p.182).

Like many a Negro cabin located on Faulkner's literary terrain, this church is likewise of simplistic architecture and the only feature that distinguishes it from neighboring buildings is its vertical dimension. Faulkner emphasizes this aspect while contrasting the "flat earth" surrounding the "painted church" with its "crazy steeple" lifted into the air. The chief aspect of a tall edifice is to evoke a sense of reverence or deep respect in the eye of the beholder when he or she is entering that building. Churches, for instance, have employed this aspect for centuries.

It is important to note that the black minister is able to fill the parishioners with enthusiasm and joy, "the congregation sighed as if it waked from a collective dream and moved a little in its seats" (SF, p.183), and "in the midst of the voices and the hands Ben sat, rapt in his sweet blue gaze. Dilsey sat bolt upright, crying rigidly and quietly in the annealment and the blood of the remembered Lamb" (SF, p.185). As Dilsey's and, to a lesser extent, Ben's emotions expose, the Negro church is a place for a meaningful communion – despite its primitive architecture and simple decoration. The Easter sermon moves Dilsey and, as Volpe observes, even the feeble-minded Benjy Compson feels unknowingly the love that Dilsey embodies (2004, p.125). For Kerr, the faith of Dilsey [and Nancy Mannigoe] contrasts with the "weakness, selfishness, and viciousness of those whom they serve", namely the Compson family and Temple Drake, "who were nurtured in the Southern upper-class tradition" (1969, p.184). In this respect, Volpe adds:

> In contrast to her [Dilsey's] humility and faith are the pride and self-interest of the Compsons. Their love is directed inwards, isolating each of them from his fellowmen. It is a cancerous selfishness that eats away their humanity, their strength, and their integrity. In the sterile wasteland of the modern world, Dilsey is the symbol of resurrection and life (2001, p.126).

It is striking that Benjy attends service in a Negro church and not in a church for the white population. This fact highlights, once more, Benjy's status as a pariah from the Jefferson community [see also chapter 6.3.5]. As Vickery asserts in this context, "the whites regard him as a problem: since he is obviously white, they frown on his attendance at a Negro church, but since he is obviously an idiot, they are unwilling to receive him into theirs" (1995, p.47).

In *The Sound and the Fury*, the image of the church is used to show that the black community is united in their hopes and dreams, whereas in *Light in August* the image of the church is employed to render reverend Hightower's estrangement from his parishioners who shun him because he has proved himself unworthy of directing Jefferson's religious life. Time and again, chief Presbyterian Hightower dedicates sermon after sermon to the sanctification of his deceased grandfather:

> And they told Byron how the young minister [Hightower] was still excited even after six months, still talking about the Civil War and his grandfather, a cavalryman, who was killed, and about General Grant's stores burning in Jefferson until it did not make sense at all. They told Byron how he seemed to talk that way in the pulpit too, wild too in the pulpit, using religion as though it were a dream. Not a nightmare, but something which went faster than the words in the Book; a sort of cyclone that did not even need to touch the actual earth. And the old men and women did not like that, either.
>
> It was as if he couldn't get religion and that galloping cavalry and his dead grandfather shot from the galloping horse untangled from each other, even in the pulpit (LIA, pp.61, 62).

Unable to acknowledge the actual person behind the legend, Hightower remains blind to his glorification of his grandfather and thus incites the parishioners to strike. As Vickery points out, "dominated by his vision, he [Hightower] stands in the pulpit, fusing religion, the galloping cavalry, and his dead grandfather into one incoherent rhapsody to the growing uneasiness of his parish and to the suicide of his wife" (1964, pp.77, 78).

After the death of his wife, the parishioners refuse to attend his service and try to make him leave their church: "He came and entered the church. The congregation rose as one and walked out, leaving the minister and those from other churches who had come as though to a show" (LIA, p.69). In the end, the community succeeds in removing Hightower from the pulpit and Hightower, in turn, distances himself from his parishioners when he hides himself in his bungalow. In this respect, Hightower fails where Reverend Shegog succeeds – because Shegog is simply able to move the hearts and spirits of his congregation.

In "Riposte in Tertio", the fourth volume of *The Unvanquished*, Faulkner renders an Episcopal church not as a place for praying but, instead, as a place for

redistributing goods stolen from the Union army. It is the church where the Sartorises in former times used to go to but today, after three years of war, "there hadn't been an Episcopal service in the church in almost three years now. Brother Fortinbride was a Methodist, and I [Bayard II] dont know what the people were. [...]. I reckon this was the first church with a slave gallery some of them had ever seen" (UNV, pp.134, 135). As this excerpt shows, Bayard not only watches a Methodist minister [who is clearly not as respected by the Sartorises as an Episcopal minister but they have to accept him since there is nobody else] giving a sermon in an Episcopal church, his observations also reveal that the black congregation was relegated to the places in the gallery. This makes clear that even the churches were instrumental in segregating the different races. This also finds expression in *The Sound and the Fury*, where Faulkner explicitly refers to the existence of separate churches for the black population. In the light of this, it is obvious that institutionalized religion then failed to reconcile the different races.

In *The Unvanquished*, Bayard also remembers how church life was before the Civil War and how his family then held a prominent position among the congregation:

> [...]; and I could remember back when Father would be in the pew with us and the grove outside would be full of carriages from the other plantations, and Doctor Worsham in his stole beneath the altar and for each white person in the auditorium there would be ten niggers in the gallery. And I reckon that on that first Sunday when Granny knelt down in public, it was the first time they had ever seen anyone kneel in a church (UNV, p.135).

In the present, however, Granny [Rosa Millard] still kneels in the pew before she opens up her account book and distributes stolen goods to the congregation:

> It was a big blank account book; it weighed almost fifteen pounds; they opened it on the reading desk, Granny and Ringo side by side, while Granny drew the tin can out of her dress and spread the money on the book. But nobody moved until she began to call out the names. Then they came up one at a time, while Ringo read the names off the book, [...], and the amount they had received before. Each time Granny would make them tell what they intended to do with the money; and now she would make them tell her how they had spent it, and she would look at the book to see whether they had lied or not (p.138).

In *The Mansion,* Faulkner presents another variation of the church motif. On the one hand, there is a dilapidated church in California, which collapses and accidentally kills Mink's enemy Stillwell – an incident that finally releases Mink from prison:

> There was a church in the Mexican quarter [in San Diego]. They had stopped using it as a church, had a new one or something. Anyway it had been deconsecrated, so what went on inside it since, even the police haven't quite caught up with yet. Last week it fell down. They don't know why: it just fell down all of a sudden. They found a man in it – what was left of him. This is what the telegram says: 'Fingerprints F.B.I. identification your man Number 08213 Shuford H. Stillwell.' (MAN, p.767).

On the other hand, there is the dream of Brother Goodyhay of building a church – an enterprise in which Mink gets involved in and through which he earns enough money to buy the gun with which he eventually kills his cousin:

> He, Mink, went around it [Goodyhay's dilapidated house] into the back yard, which if anything was of an even more violent desolation than the front, since the back yard contained another house not dismantled so much as collapsed – a jumble of beams, joists, window- and door-frames and even still intact sections of siding; [...] (p.917).

Mink's task is tear to down this building and to use its material to build a new church out of it. Summing up the function of churches in *The Unvanquished* and *The Mansion*, Ruzicka writes:

> If something need be said about all these churches, it is that they are, even in collapse, definitive of themselves. They are enclosures intended for the implementation of grace, in whatever form it may need to take – the necessities of food, clothing, money, transportation, or just plain wisdom. All are generated against overwhelming odds, usually as the result of communal action in a crisis (1985, p.85).

In the context of the *Collected Stories*, a church is used as a setting for the story "Shingles for the Lord" [1942]. This is one of three stories featuring the Grier family, who are yeoman farmers living in the vicinity of Frenchman's Bend. When the head of the family, Res Grier, is commissioned to replace the shingles of the hamlet's church, he almost works against the completion of the new church

roof because he worries about the time he has to serve this communal service. Thus, he comes up with schemes to shorten his working time. But as so often in Faulkner, Res ends up as a tricked trickster and due to his schemes, the church not only needs a new roof, but it has to be rebuilt completely – for Res accidentally sets the church on fire when he attempts to beat Solomon Quick at dog trading:

> It was a old church. Long dried out, and full of colored-picture charts that [reverend] Whitfield had accumulated for more than fifty years, that the lantern had lit right in the middle of when it finally exploded. […] "I was wrong," Whitfield said. "I told you we would meet here tomorrow to roof a church. We'll meet here in the morning to raise one" (CS, pp.40, 41).

During the whole story, Res has never entered the church – not even as he tried to put out the fire. It appears as if he does not want to participate in the religious life of the hamlet. At the end of the story, Res indeed gets excluded from the parish for he is not allowed to rebuild the new church. As reverend Whitfield remarks, "But not one hand shall you lay to this new house until you have proved to us that you are to be trusted again with the powers and capacities of a man" (CS, p.41).

Faulkner also employs church imagery in one of his European stories, "Mistral". For further information about the use of this church see chapter 6.

To summarize this chapter briefly: Faulkner employs the fictional churches of Jefferson and Yoknapatawpha as "visual embodiments of the power that Protestantism exerts on the fictional community" (Gutting 1992, p.88). Thus it is important to belong to the right church [e.g. Episcopal]. Like the courthouse and the jail, the [mostly whitewashed] churches located in Faulkner's fictional county are symbolically charged buildings that have a particularly strong influence on the black population. In the caste system of the Old South, churches did not only tolerate slavery but they were also instrumental in racial segregation. Since churches were bulwarks of the order of the Old South, they were likewise helpful in defining roles and thus different codes of conduct for men and women.

Churches are tall buildings with a steeple in order to emphasize a congregation's near to God. The aspect of verticality, then, makes churches become symbolically charged buildings for the community (house society principle three).

### 6.2.6 Brothels

Brothels are patriarchal institutions where men go to have sex with women who are not their wives. Since brothels are crossing points between the sexual desire of men and the prostitute's willingness to fulfill these desires, they are also highly gendered places where a male fantasy can become reality. In the context of gender studies, a brothel is symbolic of female subservience and male dominance.

In Faulkner, however, the image of the brothel is rather ambiguous. For one thing, brothels are lower class places where problems can be dealt with which are taboos in society. In addition to that, brothels can also be dark and frightening places. In the novel *Sanctuary*, for instance, Miss Reba's bordello is rendered as a "grotesque, black-humorous place" (Makoto 1999), whereas the same brothel appears in *The Reivers* in a rather positive light. Despite some inconsistencies, one can assume that the brothel used in *The Reivers* is the same one previously employed in *Sanctuary*. In his senior works, Faulkner often confuses the names of character and places he has introduced in earlier works.

However, the ambiguous nature of Faulkner's fictitious brothels is not only traceable in *The* Reivers, but also in *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*, in which one character would rather prefer the service of a brothel than to give children sex education all by himself: "If I am ever unlucky enough to have a son, I'm going to take him to a nice clean whore-house myself on his tenth birthday" (WP, p.118).

Yet even in *Sanctuary*, the true nature of the brothel is not definitely clear. On the one hand, it becomes a symbol for female entrapment: Miss Reba's brothel is rendered as a grotesque place where Popeye keeps Temple Drake for almost a whole month after he has raped her [Popeye pays Minnie, a prostitute working for Miss Reba, five dollars a day neither to let her out of the door nor to let her use the telephone]. On the other hand, this brothel is run by a sympathetic character who cares for her girls. Miss Reba's brothel is set in Memphis, located in a "three storey house in a small grassless yard" (SAN, p.191), whose entrance "was hidden by a dingy lattice cubicle leaning a little awry" (SAN, p.142). Although Temple has the chance to get away from the brothel, she does not leave. Apparently, something seems to keep her imprisoned within that very house.

According to Volpe's chronology to Faulkner's sixth novel, Temple arrived at Miss Reba's brothel on May 12th; Horace learns from Miss Reba on June 19th that Temple is no longer in her house (2001, pp.383, 384). Thus, she has been in that brothel for thirty-nine days. This poses the question why she has been there for such a long time. The answer is, then, that Temple has become attracted to the place and its corrupting influence. She has started to drink alcohol and does not care if she is seen naked. This becomes apparent during an interview with Miss Reba [who considers her to be Popeye's sweetheart] and Horace Benbow: "'I want a drink,' she said, pulling up the shoulder of her gown. […] 'Lie down and cover up your nekkidness, anyway,' Miss Reba said, rising. 'You already had three since supper'" (SAN, p.214). It appears as if the brothel is indeed the real sanctuary within this novel for it is the place where Temple discovers and develops the darker side of her personae. Interestingly, Temple herself is not only an emblem of Southern womanhood – she is at the same time also a perversion of the Southern concept of womanhood: although she is virtually a 'temple' within a brothel, she gives in to its corrupting influences and indulges in sexual pleasures.

Even though Temple spends most of the time in a room of her own, she nevertheless perceives what is going on in the house – mostly through the sounds and smells she senses within this place: "The house was full of sounds. Indistinguish-able, remote, they came to her with a quality of awakening, resurgence, as though the house itself had been asleep, rousing itself with dark. She heard something which might have been a burst of laughter in a shrill woman voice. Steamy odors from the tray drifted across her face" (SAN, pp.156, 157).

Yet Temple is not the only character living temporarily in this whorehouse. There are also Virgil Snopes and his friend Fonzo, who are living at Miss Reba's brothel as well – without even knowing it is a brothel:

> On the third day as they were leaving the house in the morning, Miss Reba met them at the door. She wanted to use their room in the afternoons while they were absent. There was a detective's convention in town and business would look up some, she said. […] "What business you reckon she's in?" Fonzo said when they reached the street. "Don't know," Virgil said. "Wish I worked for her, anyway," Fonzo said. "With all them women in kimonos and such running around."

> "Wouldn't do you no good," Virgil said. "They're all married. Aint you heard them?"
> The next afternoon when they returned from the school they found a woman's undergarment under the washstand. Fonzo picked it up. 'She's a dress-maker,' he said. […]
> The house appeared to be filled with people who did not sleep at night at all. They could hear them at all hours, running up and down the stairs, and always Fonzo would be conscious of women, of female flesh (SAN, p.195).

On the twelfth day Virgil and Fonzo spend in Memphis, they secretly go to a brothel in the vicinity of Miss Reba's. Yet when they return, they fear Miss Reba's actions in case she finds out where they have been: "When they reached home Fonzo stopped. 'We got to sneak in, now,' he said. 'If she was to find out where we been and what we been doing, she might not let us stay in the house with them ladies no more'" (SAN, p.196). However, when Minnie lets them go into the house, Miss Reba says: "'[…] you boys been out mighty late tonight'", whereupon Fonzo remarks: "'We been to prayer-meeting'" (SAN, p.197).

These passages contribute to the light side of the novel. Faulkner seems to have realized that his dark portrayal of 20th century American society in *Sanctuary* needs a kind of comic relief. This is why he takes use of humorous passages. In *The Mansion*, however, Faulkner retells the Fonzo and Virgil episode once again.

Miss Reba's brothel is clearly no place where a Temple Drake should get in contact with, but for the male world, on the other hand, it seems to be the right spot. This becomes apparent in *The Reivers*. This novel shows the initiation of an eleven-year old boy, Lucius Priest, into manhood. As Boon Hogganbeck wants to visit a prostitute in Memphis, Boon stays with Lucius at Miss Reba's brothel [see also chapter 6.3.2]: "The woman [Minnie] was still talking. 'You [Boon] know as well as I do that Mr. Binford disapproves like hell of kids using houses for holiday vacations; […]. Not to mention the customers, coming in here for business and finding instead we're running a damn kindergarden" (REI, pp.94, 95).

Like Fonzo and Virgil, Lucius has no idea where he really is: "I didn't know much about boarding houses, so maybe they could have one with just ladies in it" (REI, p.100). This is why he asks Boon, "'I mean, don't any men board here? Live here?'" whereupon Boon comes up with a glossed over version of the truth:

> "No. Don't no men actively live here except Mr. Binford, and there ain't no boarding to speak of neither. But they [the prostitutes] have plenty of company here, in and out after supper and later on; you'll see. Of course this is Sunday night, and Mr. Binford is pretty strict about Sunday: no dancing and frolicking: just visiting their particular friends quiet and polite and not wasting too much time, and Mr. Binford sees to it they damn sure better keep on being quiet and polite while they are here (REI, p.100).

Taking advantage of Lucius' childhood innocence, Boon is able to tell a story that a child might taken for granted but which makes an adult reader laugh. However, Faulkner uses the brothel in *The Reivers* primarily as a kind of boarding house. Although it is in fact a house of sins, Lucius has never been subjected there to any corrupting influences. He remains an innocent character – unlike Temple Drake who has somehow developed a strange liking for this Memphis brothel.

It is striking that there are no brothels situated within the limits of the town of Jefferson. Thus, the reader is once more able to detect the village character of this place. Whenever a character wants to have sex with a prostitute, he has to go to Memphis – as repeatedly shown in the Snopes trilogy and "Uncle Willy".

In *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem*, Faulkner employs the image of a brothel for a very different purpose. In this novel, Harry goes to a brothel to buy abortion pills for Charlotte. For Harry, there is no place else where he can ask for help:

> He had never been in a brothel in his life and had never even sought one before. So now he discovered what a lot of people have: how difficult it is to find one; [...]. [...] he asked a taxi-driver and was presently set down before a house a good deal like the one he lived in and pressed a button which made no audible response though presently a curtain over the narrow window beside the door fell a second before he could have sworn someone had looked at him. Then the door opened, a negro maid conducted him down a dim hallway and into a room containing a bare veneered dining-table bearing an imitation cut-glass punch bowl and scarred by the white rings from damp glass bottoms, a pianola slotted for coins, and twelve chairs ranged along the four walls in orderly sequence like tombstones in a military graveyard, where the maid left him to sit and look at a lithograph of the Saint Bernard dog saving the child from the snow and another of President Roosevelt, until there entered a double-chinned woman of no especial age more than forty, with blondined hair and a lilac satin gown not quite clean. "Good evening," she said. "Stranger in town?" (WP, p.177).

Of course, Harry's request will not be dealt with there. Instead, he is dragged out by a bouncer whereupon he has to go to a drugstore in order to buy abortion pills that naturally do not work (WP, pp.180, 181).

In the context of the *Collected Stories*, there is only one reference to a brothel within the whole volume. In "Ad Astra", a story taking place on Armistice Day, November 11, 1918, two drunken soldiers take a captured German pilot to a brothel. The story's end remains ambiguous whether these soldiers celebrate this day together with the German in the brothel or kill him on the way to it:

> We watched them come into silhouette in the mouth of an alley where a light was. There was an arch there, and the faint cold pale light on the arch and on the walls so that it was like a gate and they entering the gate, holding the German up between them. "What will they do with him?" Bland said. "Prop him in the corner and turn the light off? Or do French brothels have he-beds too?" (CS, pp.426, 427).

Although the word brothel never occurs within the text of "Uncle Willy", the reader nevertheless gets a hint at whorehouses in Memphis where Uncle Willy has met his later Mrs. Christian [a former prostitute]. After Uncle Willy's sister has paid a substantial sum to Mrs. Christian for leaving Jefferson behind, she says goodbye to the male villagers in her very own way: "'Come on up to Manuel Street and see me sometime and I will show you hicks what you and this town can do to yourselves and one another" (CS, p.238). Brown identifies the fictional Manuel Street as Mulberry Street in Memphis' red light district (1976, p.125).

Whereas brothels repeatedly occur in Faulkner's novels, his short stories, on the other hand, are not of further relevance in the discussion of this topic.

To summarize briefly, brothels in Faulkner are places run by women who offer sexual pleasures to the male population. Run by female characters, they are matriarchal spaces within a patriarchal society. Although brothels are public spaces, they provide a high degree of intimacy. Here, again, the aspect of verticality is of significance. While a brothel's first floor is a meeting place for male customers [and therefore a public space], the prostitute's rooms in the upper stories, by contrast, guarantee a high degree of privacy. Thus we see the paradox of the existence of highly private spaces within the confines of a public building.

### 6.2.7 Public Open Spaces

In the literary terrain of Yoknapatawpha County, there are also some uninhabitable built structures which are nevertheless as significant for the community as the courthouse or the jail, for example. As Hines notes, "though not 'architectural' in the sense of providing shelter and functional accommodation, public sculpture was a crucial genre of the Yoknapatawpha landscape. […] As such, [they remain] […] the most consciously contrived examples of the presence of the past in the present" (1996, pp.16, 19). The most important public sculptures in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County are the monument of the Confederate soldier and Colonel Sartoris' stone figure on the Jefferson cemetery.

Located in front of the courthouse and exceptionally directed towards the South and not against the enemy in the North, the Confederate Monument is a token of the past and glorifies the old days. Standing like a "white candle" among the trees on the square (FID, p.175), this monument reminds of the Confederate soldiers who fought and died in the preservation of Southern values and traditions. However, the most notable occurrence of the Confederate statue is to be found in the concluding chapter of *The Sound and the Fury*. Habitually, Benjy passes the Confederate monument counter-clockwise. When Luster, however, decides to turn left and not right, he violates Benjy's sense of order and thus makes him cry:

> They approached the square, where the Confederate soldier gazed with empty eyes beneath his marble hand in wind and weather. […] Luster hit Queenie again and swung her to the left at the monument.
> For an instant Ben sat in an utter hiatus. Then he bellowed. […]. There was more than astonishment in it, it was horror; shock; agony eyeless, tongueless; […] (SF, p.199).

When Jason intervenes and turns the carriage to the left of the monument, Benjy soon calms down and his watery eyes become "empty and blue and serene again" for everything is in "its ordered place", again (SF, p.199). Interestingly, Faulkner links the statue's "empty eyes" to Benjy's "eyeless agony" and vacant eyes. While the monument honors the glory of the past, Benjy, by contrast, can be seen as a living cenotaph that shows the decay and erosion of traditional Southern values.

Like the Confederate monument, the stone figure of Colonel John Sartoris is just another sculpture paying tribute to the legends and the glory of the Old South:

> […] John Sartoris lifted his stone back and his fulsome gesture amid a clump of cedars beyond which the bluff sheered sharply away into the valley. […]. He stood on a stone pedestal, in his frock coat and bareheaded, one leg slightly advanced and one hand resting lightly on the stone pylon beside him. His head was lifted a little in that gesture of haughty arrogance which repeated itself generation after generation with a fateful fidelity, his back to the world and his carven eyes gazing out across the valley where his railroad ran and beyond it to the blue changeless hills, and beyond that. The pedestal and effigy were mottled with sessions of rain and sun and drippings […], and the bold carving of the letters was bleared with mold, […] (FID, pp.426, 427, 428).

This larger-than-life size monument aptly mirrors the distorted way the Sartorises perceived themselves and their position within the Jefferson society. Although the old Colonel built the first railroad to connect Jefferson with the larger world, he is actually a racist and a scoundrel who does not even shrink from killing innocents. Thus, the statue reflects the legend but ignores the actual man behind the legend.

Another imposing public sculpture on the cemetery is Eula's gravestone: "another colyum not a-tall saying what it had cost Flem Snopes because what it was saying was exactly how much it was worth to Flem Snopes, […], looking – the stone, the marble – whiter than white itself in the warm October sun […]" (TOW, p.656). Although Snopes hardly spends money at all, Flem needed to donate his deceased wife an impressive tombstone to cover up the fact that he exploited Eula's eighteen-year affair with Major de Spain for his own purposes – which eventually resulted in her suicide. Even the epitaph on Eula's gravestone, "a virtuous wife is a crown to her husband," was chosen all by Flem himself.

For Aiken, the gravestones of the Jefferson cemetery represent a "bygone age of affluence" and he contrasts the kind of gravestones used before and after the Civil War: "Rural cemeteries of the planters contained large tombstones for those who died before the Civil War, while the small post-war monuments and the unkempt condition of the cemeteries attested to a poverty and a seeming loss of pride that had come" (1979, pp.193, 194).

## 6.3 House Related Imagery

### 6.3.1 Attics

Usually, attics are not considered to be places of habitation. In this context, Zivley asserts: “Attics do not house humans, […] they warehouse artifacts that carry personal and familial history – often a history that has been suppressed. And that history is what makes attics interesting” (Zivley 2003). Attics are indeed peculiar places; they keep those things that do not fit within the normal living rooms. As a result, they serve as lumber-rooms storing “memories, memorabilia, and memories” (Zivley 2003). Literary attics, on the other hand, are sometimes inhabited – mostly by alienated or isolated characters. Quoting examples from the works of various female 19th century authors, Gilbert and Gubar’s study *The Madwoman in the Attic* discusses in a feminist critical discourse the image of the attic as a site of female oppression. The title of this study is derived from Bronte’s novel *Jane Eyre*, in which Rochester’s mad wife Bertha stays locked in an attic.

In Faulkner, attics can both be storage rooms for keeping things of the past or refuges for solitary and estranged characters.

To begin with, the image of the attic as a warehouse storing items of the past is a significant detail in *Flags in the Dust*. When Old Bayard climbs to the attic where he keeps the family chronicles in a cedar chest, he sits there for a long time to record the death of his grandson in the yellowed pages of the family chronicles [see also chapter 6.1.1]. Sitting in this enclosure of the past at the top of the Sartoris house, Bayard finds himself confronted with the history of the Sartoris family. This is why he examines some objects there which once belonged to his father such as his old derringer and dueling pistols (FID, pp.97, 98).

In “My Grandmother Millard and General Bedford Forrest and the Battle of Harrykin Creek”, another short story dealing with the Sartoris house, Faulkner shows that this attic is also the place where the Sartorises keep the big trunk they use as a protective container for the family silver whenever they bury it in a pit outside the house: “We had done it so many times by now that we didn’t even need the lantern any more to go to the attic and get the trunk” (CS, p. 668).

In *Absalom, Absalom!,* Faulkner employs attics as hiding places for two different characters. On the one hand, there is Goodhue Coldfield who nails himself into the attic of his own house where he starves to death [see chapter 6.3.2], and, on the other hand, there is Henry Sutpen, whose secret hiding place in the Sutpen mansion is also situated in an attic [see also chapter 6.3.2].

In "Carcassonne", a prose poem maybe written in 1926 but published not before the 1931 publication of *These Thirteen*, Faulkner uses the image of an attic as an elevated space for a "post mortal flight of consciousness" of a dying poet (Skei 1999, p.72) – although the story or poem is open to different interpretations. In this text, the protagonist lies beneath an unrolled strip of tarred roof paper in a rat-infested attic of a cantina in a town called Rincon. Although Faulkner offers only sparse information about this attic ["The ceiling of the garret slanted in a ruined pitch to the low eaves." […] "It was dark" (CS, pp. 896, 897)], it nevertheless becomes clear that this attic serves a metaphorical function. This room under the roof is the vantage point of a dying man's imaginary journey to heaven. The protagonist, who can be identified as Wilfred Midgleston because of some parallels between "Carcassonne" and "Black Music", is divided in two: in his spirit and in his flesh. For Volpe, "The spirit is represented by imagination, the part that dreams, that 'suffered neither insects nor temperature,' that was 'neither flesh nor unflesh' (CS, p.895). The flesh, which is identified as the skeleton, consists of the rest of him" (2004, p.45). In a dialogue between the spirit and the flesh, the reader learns that the protagonist wants to "*perform something bold and tragical and austere*" (CS, p.899). As a result, the protagonist dreams of leaving this garret "*on a buckskin pony with eyes like blue electricity and a mane like tangled fire, galloping up the hill and right off into the high heaven of the world"* while his skeleton lies still and groans (CS, p.895). However, Faulkner contrasts the dark attic (the phrase "it was dark" is repeated five times throughout the whole text) with the shining light radiating from the imaginary horse soaring into the sky ["its tossing mane in golden swirls like fire" (CS, p.899)]. At the end of the story, when the horse "thunders up the long blue hill of heaven" and "muses the dark and tragic figure of the Earth, his mother" (CS, pp.899, 900), Faulkner shows that the protagonist's spirit has left the garret – which indicates that he has died.

As stated above, there is a link between “Carcassonne” and “Black Music”. Volpe believes that Faulkner wrote both stories in 1926, although both of them were not published until 1931 (2004, p.40). However, the main character in “Black Music” is Wilfred Midgleston, a poor tramp who sleeps in an attic over a cantina. As Midgleston reveals: “The house belongs to the Company, and Mrs. Widrington, […], the manager’s wife, lets me sleep in the attic. It’s high and quiet, except for a few rats” (CS, p.803). This information is useful to identify the protagonist of “Carcassonne”, but in the context of “Black Music”, this statement is mere décor for the attic there is not charged with a deeper meaning – except to indicate that Midgleston is a very poor character who is rejected by his society. In his Faulkner biography, Blotner notes that the poet’s attic in both stories looks “like the one Faulkner had shared with [his friend] Spratling in New Orleans” while he was living there on Pirate’s Alley in 1925 (1991, p.254).

In “Mountain Victory”, Faulkner uses the attic as the place for the unnamed woman and her younger brother [Hule]: “It was dark in the hall, and cold, with the black chill of the mountain April coming up through the floor about her bare legs and her body in the single coarse garment” (CS, pp. 762, 763). This attic is a site of tension and crisis inside the house for it is the place where the father beats the young woman because of her obvious interest in Saucier Weddel. In addition, this attic is also the locus where she is waiting for Weddel so that he can have sexual intercourse with her. Yet Saucier, however, refuses to go up there because he does not want to become involved with this grotesque mountain family.

To summarize this chapter briefly, Faulkner’s attics are elevated spaces at the top of a house storing valuable properties and items indicative of a family’s history. Attics are refuges for isolated and estranged characters who are in conflict with their environment. In Faulkner, attics sometime become dwelling places of poor white characters. In this regard, Faulkner’s attics are hiding places for a murderer and for a character who would rather starve in his attic than to be a part of his community any longer. Finally, the image of the attic is also used as a metaphorical site where a dying man experiences a final act of creative imagination before or while he is dying. Used this way, the elevated locus of an attic serves to mirror the higher self of a character.

Grounding his analysis on Bachelard's explanations of the principle of verticality, Watson also acknowledges the symbolic relationship between an attic and a character's psyche or mind in Faulkner's works. According to Watson, "in the vertical figure of the self-as-house, an attic – or high tower – is the realm of the intellect and idealism, the cellar of the physical body; private rooms house one's secret' self and public rooms the social" (1989, p.139). According to Gutting, the "attic may also stand for the super-ego and the cellar for an individual's subconscious" (1992, p.99). Bachelard himself, however, asserts that upper spaces represent rationality whereas cellars, by contrast, symbolize irrationality (1994, p.18). In the light of this, one has to comprehend that such characters like Henry Sutpen, Wilfred Midgleston, and Goodhue Coldfield, who seek shelter in the highest and presumably most private room of their houses, have deliberately decided to exclude themselves from their society. Although they believe to think rationally, their actions are irrational. With regard to Gilbert and Gubar's study quoted above, one can say that some of Faulkner's male characters are 'Madmen in the Attic'.

### 6.3.2 Doors

A crucial device of Faulkner is the use he makes of door imagery to tell his stories. As a careful analysis of the concordances to Faulkner's books reveals, the noun "door" occurs 2.533 times throughout all of his novels, thereby even surpassing the occurrence of several other important nouns as, for example, "house" (2.471), "room" (1.598), and "window" (871). In the *Uncollected Stories*, the word "door" appears 276 times; in the *Collected Stories*, the same word occurs 350 times. It is thus the seventh most frequently occurring noun in this volume, only being surpassed by the words "man" (979), "time" (740), "face" (529), "house" (436), "day" (363) and "men" (353). For further statistical data see appendix or page four.  This empirical and phenomenological study of Faulkner's body of work raises two important questions: Why does door imagery occur so frequently in Faulkner's writings? Which purposes does door imagery serve?

Although both doors and windows connect the inside of a house with the outside, these architectural features logically serve completely different purposes – both in the real world as well as in the world of literature. Doors and windows are metaphors of liminality. As will be seen in the next chapter, window imagery in Faulkner often designates boundary lines signifying an individual's isolation or separation from society. Yet windows are also points of exit when doors are either locked or barred by an overbearing or authoritative parent. Open doors, on the other hand, allow entrance into a house and to all that it keeps and hides.

Despite the empirical evidence of this recurrent literary phenomenon, only a few critics have noted and analyzed Faulkner's use of door imagery so far. Williams, for instance, notes that many a Faulkner character "passed in and out of doors, faced closed doors and locked doors, and plunged through, paused, rested, or sat in doorways" (1995, p.413). Unfortunately, Williamson offers no textual evidence for this statement. Studying the dark house motif in Faulkner's writings, Polk asserts that doors give entry to a "house's labyrinthine dark secrets" and, most significantly, doors "in Faulkner [are] mostly closed; when open, the frames are likely to be filled with figures of authority that bar passage or block the view within" (1998, p.31). Bleikasten also comments on the use of doors in *Sanctuary*:

> Now allowing communication, now blocking it, the door entails dialectic of enclosure and communication, security and insecurity. The locked door provokes anguish or provides reassurance, induces paralysis or invites breaking in. Depending on whether one is locked *in* or *out*, it means confinement or exclusion. The open door, on the other hand, points to the possibility of escape or retreat; ceasing to be a barrier or protection, it becomes again a way out, the promise of an elsewhere – unless it turns out to be the lure of another trap (1990, p.230)

Although both Polk's and Bleikasten's observations chiefly concern *Absalom, Absalom!* and *Sanctuary*, they are also applicable to Faulkner's use of the door motif in general. Even in his apprentice works, Faulkner already shows a keen interest in door imagery. In his first novel, *Soldier's Pay*, for instance, Faulkner employs door imagery as a metaphor describing the circle of life: "Sex and death: the front door and the back door of the world. How indissolubly are they associated in us! In youth they lift us out of the flesh, in old age they reduce us again to the flesh; one to fatten us, the other to flay us, for the worm" (SP, p.291).

Irwin's study *Doubling and Incest / Repetition and Revenge* draws attention to the image of the dark door used in Faulkner's first novel. This critic links the image of the dark door with the mirror of Narcissus. In addition to that, Irwin also points out that the name of the character Januarius Jones is derived from the Latin word "Janus", the two-faced Roman god of doors and portals (1996, pp.166, 167). Standing in front of a door that has just been locked by a young woman that he had been pursuing, Januarius Jones vainly tries to convince her to open the door:

> "Damn your soul," he spoke in a quiet toneless emotion, "open the door." The wood was bland and inscrutable: baffling, holding up to him in its polished depths the fat white blur of his own face. Holding his breath he heard nothing beyond it save a clock somewhere. "Open the door," he repeated, but there was no sound. Has she gone away, or not? He wondered, straining his ears, bending to the bulky tweeded Narcissus of himself in the polished wood (SP, pp.87, 88).

Whereas the dark door in *Soldier's Pay* serves as a reflecting surface that brings to light Januarius Jones' narcissism and complacency, the subsequent novel *Mosquitoes* presents a completely different use of the same image. Here, Faulkner associates the image of the dark door with art.

Having a discussion about a book of poems with Wiseman, the brother of the poetry book's author, the artist called Fairchild says:

> "All artists are kind of insane". […] "It's a kind of dark thing. It's kind of like somebody brings you to a dark door. Will you enter that room, or not?" "But the old fellows got you into the room first, " the Semitic man said. "Then they asked you if you wanted to go out or not." "I don't know. There are rooms, dark rooms, that they didn't know anything about at all. Freud and these other-" (MOS, p.248).

For Fairchild, true artistry can only be achieved if the artist decides to open up the metaphorical dark door that gives way to an intellectual space [conscious], where the artist may discover a creative impetus of such intensity that he may appear insane to his stunned audience.

The dark door in *Mosquitoes* is therefore both a metaphor for an artist's intellectual and creative limitation [the dark door remains closed] as well as the artist's discovery of a new insight and vision that enables him or her to render the world in a different light [the dark door has been opened].

In his subsequent novels, Faulkner uses door imagery as boundary lines that divide the inner world [private space or body] from the world outside [public space]. In *Sanctuary,* a novel that deals to a great extent with sex and death, Faulkner uses door imagery to render the helplessness and vulnerability of Temple Drake, a young girl who is afraid of the men with whom she is trapped in a decayed house.

In a series of locking and unlocking of doors in the Old Frenchman place, Temple finally arrives in a barn, where she seeks shelter in a corncrib. Temple cannot decide whether to stay in the crib or to get away from it, and her indecisiveness is clearly rendered in the way she uses the crib door:

> She had expected the door to be locked and for a time she could not pull it open, her numb hands scoring at the undressed planks until she could hear her finger nails. It swung back and she sprang out. At once she sprang back into the crib and banged the door to. […] She opened the door and peered out […]. The blind man's stick clattered again. She jerked her head back and closed the door to a crack and watched him pass […]. Then she opened the door and stepped gingerly down (SAN, pp.87, 88).

Temple's opening and closing of the crib door reflects her inner turmoil and the door itself becomes a symbol of Temple's fear of the men who are pursuing her. Temple, however, shows the same play of opening and closing a door again in a scene set shortly after Horace has been visiting her at Miss Reba's brothel:

> She rose quietly and went to the door and listened again. Then she opened it. The tray sat on the floor. She stepped over it and went to the stairs and peered over the rail. [...] She returned to her room. She waited fifteen minutes. She banged the door and was tramping furiously down the stairs [...]. She returned and stood just inside the door [...]. Temple opened the door, holding it just ajar. [...] Temple shut the door and shot the bolt (SAN, pp.226, 227).

This door likewise mirrors Temple's unstable emotional and psychological state. In her study of door imagery in *Sanctuary*, Ellstrom asserts that Temple's passage from innocence [Temple's state before the rape] to experience [Temple's state as she stays in a brothel in Memphis after the rape] "involves subtle voyeuristic imagery of open and closed doors, imagery suggesting that Temple not only encourages her own rape, but that she consistently heightens the intensity and increases the variety of her sexual encounter" (1988, p.63). As a result, Temple's sexual awareness and desire increase in the same way as "doors progress from being open to being closed and then finally locked" (Ellstrom 1988, p.63). According to the same critic's reading of *Sanctuary*, images of closed doors occur to an increasing degree in three significant settings involving Temple Drake:

> Few doors are closed at the Old Frenchman house – the location before the rape; doors are closed more frequently in the crib – the location of the rape; and at the Memphis bordello, where Temple's sexual behavior blossoms, doors are almost always closed and are usually locked (1988, p.63).

These closed doors parallel Temple's psychological development on two levels:

> First, through an inverse parallel, while doors in the novel move from being open to being closed, Temple moves progressively further from sexual encounters which are rather limited or constricted to encounters which include a wide variety of action and attitudes. Second, through a straight parallel, while doors move from being open to being closed – perhaps out of necessity – Temple's sexual desires move from being

> rather normal to being more perverse and veiled. These later more unusual sexual desires are closed, even in their implicitness in the text. […] The ambiguity of these parallels again reflects the ambiguity of Temple's desires. This second parallel is logical, doors closing to hide complex, perverse sexual acts (1988, pp.63, 64).

Ellstrom's analysis of closing doors in *Sanctuary* highlights Faulkner's careful use of door imagery to render Temple's mental state, but this article takes little notice of the psychological dimension of door imagery. Taking a Freudian perspective, the images of rooms and doors may take on a different complexion for to enter a room, i.e. the crossing of a liminal space, can also be considered as a symbolic representation of a sexual penetration. As Freud states about symbolism in dreams,

> The female genitals are symbolically represented by all such objects as share their characteristic of enclosing a hollow space which can take something into itself: by *pits, cavities* and *hollows*, […]. Some symbols have more connection with the uterus than with the female genitals: thus, *cupboards, stoves* and, more especially, *rooms*. Here room-symbolism touches on house symbolism. *Doors* and *gates*, again, are symbols of the genital orifice. […] And the question of the room being *open* or *locked* fits in with this symbolism, and the *key* that opens it is a decidedly male symbol (1971, pp. 156, 158).

As stated in chapter 4, the typical representation of the human body in dreams is the figure of the house. Likewise, the hollow space of a room with its surrounding walls is thus an appropriate symbol to represent either a uterus or a female body. In this respect, it is important to note that the German language includes the word "Frauenzimmer", which is a rather derogative synonym for the noun "woman". Nonetheless, this word highlights the close association between a woman and the room inside of a house, thereby also indicating the woman's expected [traditional] function: to be a part of the house – because it is the locus and sum of all her life.

Although Faulkner repeatedly stated that he was not familiar with Freud's work, "[…] everybody talked about Freud when I lived in New Orleans, but I have never read him" (SL, p.125), *Sanctuary* clearly reveals influences of Freud's writings about dream works. In this novel, which also contains the highest occurrence of the noun "door" in all of Faulkner's books, rooms are clearly used to represent the female body, while at the same time doors symbolize genital

orifices. In this context, Seed argues, "rooms can represent woman and therefore [do] doors suggest the genital orifice: Temple is repeatedly trying to bolt her doors for self-protection, but, when Popeye finally catches her alone, the door of the room 'yawns' open as if to underline her sexual vulnerability" (1990, p.78). Although Seed offers no textual evidence for his statement, *Sanctuary* is abundant with scenes that illustrate Freudian influences. In the bedroom scene at the Old Frenchman place, for instance, Temple uses a chair to lock her door, but Van and Goodwin break into her room violently:

> "She's locked it", Van said. He struck the door, high. "Open the door," he shouted. […] "Hush," Goodwin said. "There's no lock on it. Push it." […] He kicked it. The chair buckled and sprang into the room. Van banged the door open and they entered, […]. Van kicked the chair across the room (SAN, pp. 72, 73).

Van's desire to have intercourse with Temple is shown in his breaking down of the bedroom door and in his kicking of the chair into the middle of the room. Although Temple feels cornered by the men who carry Gowan into her room, it is Popeye of whom she is mostly afraid of. In contrast to his fellows, Popeye is the only one who walks across the whole room and comes closer to her while Temple "stood crouched into the corner, fumbling at the torn raincoat" (SAN, pp.74, 75). Popeye's crossing of the threshold to Temple's bedroom as well as his uninhibited and unhindered walk towards her is a violation of her personal space. It is exactly this violation of a liminal space that foreshadows Popeye's later rape of Temple.

Yet Temple is not the only character linked with door imagery. For Bleikasten, the door motif is also associated with Ruby: "Keeper of the house and guardian of its threshold […], she is most often seen 'inside the door' [nine times], immobile, on the lookout, determined, it seems, to bar the way to any intruder" (1990, p.232). Comparing the different ways Faulkner employs door imagery in connection with Temple Drake and Ruby Lamar, Bleikasten asserts: "For Temple, however, the door is not a strategic position, a place to be occupied and, if need be, defended. If Ruby usually stands within the door, Temple stands before or behind it, uses it as a shield or confronts it as an obstacle. With her the door motif is drawn into another far less stable pattern" (1990, p.232).

Another important element connected with the door motif in *Sanctuary* is Faulkner's use of sounds. Popeye, for instance, is a character who opens doors without making any noise. Thus, he is able to enter a room like a ghostlike entity: "Temple neither saw nor heard the door when it opened. She just happened to look toward it after how long she did not know, and saw Popeye standing there, his hat slanted across his face. Still without making any sound he entered and shut the door and shot the belt and came toward the bed" (SAN, p.158) According to Bleikasten, Popeye is the only character in this novel "whom doors obey": "Discreet and diligent accomplices, they [doors] always make way for him and afford him the safety they deny to his victims" (1990, p.233).

Lee Goodwin, on the other hand, announces his appearance at a door by the noise he makes: "She [Temple] heard the door open. The man came in, without trying to be silent. […] She knew it was Goodwin before he spoke" (SAN, pp.79, 80), "Then I [Temple] heard the door open. I could tell Lee by the way he breathes" (SAN, p.163). This distribution of sounds enables Faulkner to stress the mystical dimension of Popeye. Since the Old Frenchman's Place reminds one of the decayed manors of Gothic stories, Faulkner indeed needs a gothicesque villain who haunts the inhabitants dwelling in the ruins of the old plantation house. Without making any sounds, Popeye in fact appears as a ghostlike character.

Despite the many variations of the door motif employed in *Sanctuary*, the primary function of door imagery in this novel is to render the confinement and sexual abuse and exploitation of a female character. Yet door imagery in Faulkner is not always charged with sexual connotations. In his early short stories, for instance, Faulkner already shows a keen awareness of the social function of doors – especially of the front doors of big houses. As Rosenman notes: "the social center of Faulkner's fiction consists of rural poor whites who struggle to achieve dignity in the face of upper-class contempt" (1976, p.8).

Interestingly, some of Faulkner's male characters experience upper-class contempt when they try to enter a mansion through the front door. Being told to go to the back door, then, these characters undergo a rejection experience that will change their future life significantly. The most prominent of these poor white characters is Thomas Sutpen, whose rejection at a white plantation owner's front

door by a “monkey nigger” causes a trauma that makes him hate being a poor white and makes him run away from his family never to return again. Sent to deliver a message to the plantation owner,

> [Sutpen] a boy either thirteen or fourteen, he didn’t know which, in garments his father had got from the plantation commissary and had worn out and which one of the sisters had patched and cut down to fit him and he no more conscious of his appearance in them or of the possibility that anyone else would be than he was of his skin, following the road and turning into the gate and following the drive up past where still more niggers with nothing to do all day but plant flowers and trim grass were working, and so to the house, the portico, the front door, thinking how at last he was going to see the inside of it, […], never for one moment thinking but what the man would be as pleased to show him the balance of his things as the mountain man would have been to show the powder horn and bullet mold that went with the rifle. […] And now he stood there before that white door with the monkey nigger barring it and looking down at him in his patched made-over jeans clothes and no shoes and I don’t reckon he had even ever experimented with a comb […] – who had never thought about his own hair or clothes […] until he saw that monkey nigger, […], looking […] at them and he never even remembered what the nigger said, how it was the nigger told him, even before he had time to say what he came for, never to come to that front door again but to go around to the back (AA, pp.185, 186, 188).

Heberden states that this incident shames Sutpen. It makes him acutely aware of his lowly social status and of his naïve ignorance because the “closed door and the black slave barring it shatter this innocence and make him suddenly and absolutely ashamed of his social inferiority, just as the bite of the fruit makes Adam and Eve instantly and irrevocably aware of their nakedness” (1992, pp.298, 299). The young boy’s rejection by the black slave has become the driving force that propels him to establish the biggest plantation in all of Yoknapatawpha County. As Faulkner himself puts it: “He [Sutpen] wanted to take revenge for all the redneck people against the aristocrat who told him to go to the back door. He wanted to show that he could establish a dynasty too – he could make himself a king and raise a line of princes” (FIU, p.97). When he was given the order to use the back door, Sutpen learns that the “mountain values he grew up with, such as judging a man by his innate worth and natural skills rather than by his acquired possessions,

do not apply on the plantation" (Rosenman 1976, p.9). As a result of this experience, Sutpen leaves his family in order to start his life anew. During one of his rare conversations with Mr. Compson [Quentin's grandfather], Sutpen admits that he still wants to get rid of this agonizing moment of his childhood in order to come to terms with the trauma of the "boy-symbol at the door":

> "[…] the boy-symbol was just the figment of the amazed and desperate child; that now he would take that boy in where he would never again need to stand on the outside of a white door and knock at it: and not at all for mere shelter but so that the boy, that whatever nameless stranger, could shut that door himself forever behind him on all that he had ever known, and look ahead along the still undivulged light rays in which his descendants who might not even hear his (the boy's) name, waited to be born without even having to know that they had once been riven forever free from brutehood just as his own (Sutpen's) children were-" (AA, p. 210).

Yet Sutpen, however, is not able to learn from his experiences. In the same way as he had been turned away at a front door, Sutpen himself later rejects his first born son at his own front door and thus passes his traumatic experience on to his son:

> [Charles Bon] stood there at his own door, just as he had imagined, planned, designed, and sure enough after fifty years the forlorn nameless and homeless lost child came to knock at it and no monkey-dressed nigger anywhere under the sun to come to the door and order the child away; and Father said that even then, even though he knew that Bon and Judith had never laid eyes on one another, he must have felt and heard the design – house, position, posterity and all – come down like it had been built out of smoke, making no sound, creating no rush of displaced air and not even leaving any debris (AA, p.215).

With the arrival of Charles Bon at his own front door, Sutpen again is confronted with the "boy-symbol at the door". As soon as he recognizes his disavowed son, Sutpen understands that the appearance of Charles Bon is a threat to his intention to establish a plantation and a dynasty in order to eradicate the trauma of the past. As a result of this, Sutpen has to make a decision:

> […] either I destroy my design with my own hand, which will happen if I am forced to play last trump card, or do nothing, let matters take the course which I know they will take and see my design complete

> itself quite normally and naturally and successfully to the public eye, yet to my own in such fashion as to be a mockery and betrayal of that little boy who approached that door fifty years ago and was turned away, for whose vindication the whole plan was conceived and carried forward to the moment of this choice […] (AA, p.220).

For Heberden, Charles Bon's advent betrays the "vindication of the little boy standing before the barred door of the Tidewater plantation house". Although the little boy is a grown up now, "his tragic flaw remains his ruthless self-interest" which inevitably causes the downfall of his grand design (1992, p.300).

Even though Sutpen establishes a big plantation and elevates his social status, on a metaphorical plane he will never be able to pass the white door at the Tidewater plantation at all for he is not able to make himself respectable in the public eye. As Mr. Compson asserts, Sutpen fails because his "code of logic and morality, his formula and recipe of fact and deduction whose balanced sum and product declined, refused to swim or even float" (AA, p.221). In the end, it is exactly this lack of morality that never allows him to open up the door. Therefore, the metaphorical white front door remains locked for Sutpen forever.

Quentin Compson, on the other hand, also has to face locked doors [both metaphorical and real] in *Absalom, Absalom!*. To begin with, Quentin's quest for truth in the Sutpen legend is rendered in terms of locked door imagery. This becomes evident in one of his few conversations with Miss Rosa, whose account of Sutpen's life apparently overtaxes Quentin's capacity as a listener for he could not make sense of all of Miss Rosa's narration:

> But Quentin was not listening, because there was also something which he too could not pass – that door, the running feet on the stairs beyond it almost a continuation of the faint shot, the two women, the negress and the white girl in her underthings […] pausing, looking at the door, the yellowed creamy mass of old intricate satin and lace spread carefully on the bed and then caught swiftly up by the white girl and held before her as the door crashed in and the brother stood there, […]. He (Quentin) couldn't pass that. He was not even listening to her [Miss Rosa]; he said, "Ma'am? What's that? What did you say?" (AA, pp.139, 140).

Like the reader, Quentin lacks significant information to fully comprehend Miss Rosa's narration. As Gray notes: "as Quentin listens to the story of Sutpen from Miss Rosa in the opening pages of the novel, [he lacks] what the reader lacks to an even greater degree – sufficient information to make sense of it all" (1987, p.26). Like a detective in mystery stories, Quentin has to pass metaphorical locked doors in order to get sufficient knowledge for his understanding of the Sutpen legend.

Yet Quentin, however, is also confronted with real locked doors. When trying to get into the decaying Sutpen mansion, Quentin and Miss Rosa's entry into the house is barred by the locked front door. As Quentin watches Miss Rosa, she stands beside the "invisible front door" and orders him to open up the door: "'Break it,' she whispered. 'It will be locked, nailed. You have the hatchet. Break it'" (AA, p.293). But Quentin refuses to break the door and enters the house through a window, instead. Stumbling through the darkness of the empty house, Quentin finally arrives at a door that he finds difficult to pass: "He paused there, saying 'No. No' and then 'Only I must. I have to' […]" (AA, p.298). Entering this "bare stale room whose shutters were closed" and where a "lamp burned dimly on a crude table", he sees the "wasted, yellow face, with closed, almost transparent eyelids" of Henry Sutpen (AA, p.298), who has been hidden in the decaying house for forty years. Now Quentin, as well as the reader, has finally all the important information to understand Miss Rosa's narration. For Heberden, the discovery of Henry is crucial for the novel because without this incident Miss Rosa's narration would have a very "ambiguous and shadowy meaning" (1992, p.301).

Yet in the same way as Sutpen's trauma and Quentin's quest for Sutpen's past is rendered in terms of closed doors, Miss Rosa's early years are also characterized by closed doors she could not open up. When talking about her past, Mr. Compson describes Miss Rosa's childhood thus:

> […] (that aged and ancient and timeless absence of youth which consisted of a Cassandra-like listening beyond closed doors, of lurking in dim halls filled with that presbyterian effluvium of lugubrious and vindictive anticipation while she waited for the infancy and childhood with which nature had confounded and betrayed her to overtake the precocity of convinced disapprobation regarding any and every thing which could penetrate the walls of that house through the agency of any man, […]) […] (AA, p.47).

Born in 1845 as the youngest daughter of a family who “maybe did not even want another child” and whose mother died in her childbed, Miss Rosa was raised by her spinster aunt and “never permitted to forget” that she was born “at the price of her mother’s life” (AA, p.46). Raised to feel guilty for the death of her mother, Miss Rosa was raised to live the marginalized life of an outsider. She has spent her whole childhood and youth in the dark and empty house of her parents – a place where she has experienced neither company nor comfort:

> So for the first sixteen years of her life she lived in that grim tight little house with the father whom she hated without knowing it […] and the aunt […]; who had taught Miss Rosa to look upon her sister as a woman who had vanished not only out of the family and the house but out of life too, into an edifice like Bluebeard’s […] (AA, p.47).

When Miss Rosa herself muses about her childhood, she expresses those years of an utter lack of parental love and affection thus: “I was fourteen then, fourteen in years if they could have been called years while in that unpaced corridor which I called childhood, which was not living but rather some projection of the lightless womb itself” (AA, p.116). Elsewhere in the novel, Miss Rosa compares her years of loneliness and isolation with a pointless movement from “one closed forbidden door to the next”, as the following text shows:

> […]: so that instead of accomplishing the processional and measured milestones of the normal childhood’s time I lurked, unapprehended as though, shod with the very damp and velvet silence of the womb, I displaced no air, gave off no betraying sound, from one closed forbidden door to the next and so I acquired all I knew of that light and space in which people moved and breathed as I (that same child) might have gained conception of the sun from seeing it through a piece of smoky glass (AA, p.116).

For Heberden, Miss Rosa’s life just “progresses as a metaphoric wandering through a mansion in which none of the doors are open” (1992, p.302). In addition, this critic also considers Miss Rosa’s inability to marry a man as a kind of locked door because her spinsterhood has denied Miss Rosa an understanding of love and sex. Moreover, her virginity, that “abysmal and purblind innocence” (AA, p.213), is in effect just another symbolically locked door (1992, p.302).

Even Miss Rosa's development is rendered in terms of locked door imagery. After Charles Bon's death, for instance, Miss Rosa is not able to see his corpse because "Judith [Sutpen is] standing before the closed door to that chamber" (AA, p.114). Very similarly to Quentin who considers his lack of knowledge as a door he could not pass, Miss Rosa is confronted with a locked door that denies her access to the truth of Charles Bon's death: "But I never saw it. I do not even know of my own knowledge that Ellen ever saw it, that Judith ever loved it, that Henry slew it: [...]. You see, I never saw him. I never even saw him dead. I heard an echo, but not the shot; I saw a closed door but did not enter it" (AA, p.118, 121).

In retrospect, Miss Rosa denies having heard the shot that killed Charles Bon. In her recollection, or rather imagination, she prefers to render this incident thus: "No, there had been no shot. That sound was merely the sharp and final clap-to of a door between us and all that was, all that might have been" (AA, p. 127). In her attempt to conceive the shot as a slamming door, Miss Rosa proves her unwillingness to come to terms with the truth. Her attempt to cover up Charles's murder is important to note, for she substitutes the sound of the shot with the sound of a slamming door. Even though Miss Rosa knows for sure that she had heard a shot on the very day Charles was gunned down, she prefers to acknowledge that sound rather as the noise of a closing door because for her "the shot is a door slamming on the past with its tragic and doomed events" (Heberden 1992, p.303). Thus, she figuratively closes a door beyond which she keeps the memories of a tragic and gloomy past.

Yet in her old age, however, Miss Rosa is willing to open up that door again. This is why she finally accompanies Quentin to the rotten mansion at Sutpen's Hundred where she asks him to break the locked front door in order to let her step into the dark house where she will be confronted with her past, again.

It is striking that Miss Rosa, when forcing Quentin to open up the door, suddenly comes up with a hatchet that she has kept in the fabric of her umbrella. This strange incident recalls another disturbing moment in Miss Rosa's youth. As her father, Goodhue Coldfield, gets to know that his little store has been looted by "a company of strange troops" accompanied by some of his own citizens (AA,

p.65), he rather prefers to be voluntarily incarcerated in the attic of his own house than to live among his townspeople any longer, as the following excerpt indicates:

> That night he mounted to the attic with his hammer and his handful of nails and nailed the door behind him and threw the hammer out of the window. He was not a coward. He was a man of uncompromising moral strength; […].
>
> Then he died. One morning the hand did not come out to draw up the basket. The old nails were still in the door and neighbors helped her [Miss Rosa] break it in with axes and they found him, […], with three days' uneaten food beside his pallet bed […] (AA, p.65).

In the same way as she had to open up the door leading to the corpse of her dead father by means of an axe, Miss Rosa breaks again a locked door just to be confronted with another almost dead-like figure: Henry Sutpen. To conclude this discussion of locked door imagery in *Absalom, Absalom!*, one can say that Miss Rosa's and Quentin Compson's unlocking of closed doors are two different but nevertheless similar attempts to come to terms with a disturbing past. Whereas Miss Rosa yearns for redemption, Quentin, however, tries to understand the violent nature of the South.

By novel's end, Quentin has eventually unlocked all metaphorical and real closed doors and thus obtained a complete picture of the Sutpen legend. Yet by extending Sutpen's legend to an allegory of the Old South, Quentin himself feels torn apart between admiration and hatred of the Old South and its values. This becomes apparent in his frantic denial that he does not hate the South because this denial in fact discloses Quentin's dual view of the Old South: "I dont hate it," he said. *I dont hate it* he thought, panting in the cold air, the iron New England dark: *I dont. I dont! I dont hate it. I dont hate it* (AA, p.303).

In *Sanctuary* and *Absalom, Absalom!,* Faulkner repeatedly uses locked door imagery in order to conceal or to disclose significant facts within these novels. In this respect, locked door imagery is not only employed on a symbolic plane. The use of locked doors is likewise an important rhetorical device allowing the author to reveal only a few important aspects while significant information will be kept and delayed for as long as possible. This is why Faulkner, for instance, does not describe Popeye's rape of Temple Drake in the book's chronological order of

events but elaborates on Popeye's way of entering her hiding place, instead. After having seen Popeye killing his mate Tommy, Temple can see him approaching her while she is looking at him through the open door of the corncrib:

> He turned at looked at her. He waggled the pistol slightly and put it back in his coat, then he walked toward her. Moving, he made no sound at all; the released door yawned and clapped against the jamb, but it made no sound either; it was as though sound and silence had become inverted. She could hear silence in a thick rustling as he moved toward her through it, thrusting it aside, and she began to say Something is going to happen to me (SAN, p.102).

In this excerpt, Faulkner links the image of the yawning door [representing the female genital] with the phallic symbol of Popeye's gun. Thus, Faulkner indicates that something terrible, supposedly a rape, is going to happen, but the reader is denied any further information about this incident until the end of the novel when Temple accuses the innocent Lee Goodwin of having raped her with a corncob.

Similarly, the reader is also not aware that Popeye is in fact an impotent character and thus not able to have real sexual intercourse with Temple. In his reading of *Sanctuary,* Seed focuses on the relevance of concealed information and the author's use of doors within this context: "*Sanctuary* plays constantly on the notions of disclosure and concealment, building up suspense through a series of narrative surges towards revelation" whereby the "symbolism of doors and rooms plays a part in this issue" (1990. pp.73, 78). Heberden's analysis of door imagery in *Absalom, Absalom!* also highlights this delaying of data. This critic concludes that the image of the closed or open door has a two-fold purpose: "On the one hand, the closed door is a stopping point for many of the characters, most often indicative of misunderstanding and ignorance. On the other hand, such an image contributes to narrative postponement and layering. Even open doors, […], [are] adding tension and obscurity, juxtaposing certainty to uncertainty" (1992, p.311).

In *The Hamlet*, Faulkner does not use door imagery as a means to delay data but, instead, as a useful device indicating that something bad is going to happen to the citizens of Frenchmen's Bend. In this respect, the appearance of the first Snopes [Ab] is symbolized in Abner's standing on the threshold of Varner's store:

> One afternoon, he [Jody] was in the store, […], when at a sound behind him he turned and saw, silhouetted by the open door, a man smaller than common, in a wide hat and frock coat too large for him, standing with a curious planted stiffness. “You Warner?” the man said, in a voice not harsh exactly, or not deliberately harsh so much as rusty from infrequent use.
> “I’m one Varner,” Jody said […] “What can I do for you?” “My name is Snopes. I heard you got a farm to rent” (HAM, p.8).

Set between the inside [private space] and the outside [community’s world], the threshold becomes a symbolic frame to introduce Abner Snopes and to indicate thus the intrusion of Snopesism in Frenchmen’s Bend. However, the reader immediately senses that the appearance of Ab Snopes will have a negative effect on the citizens of the hamlet. This impression is reinforced when Jody asks him where he had been farming before whereupon Ab simply answers “West”, an answer pronounced with a “complete inflectionless finality, as if he had closed a door behind him” (HAM, p.9). Thus, Ab makes Jody stop asking him any more questions about his past for Ab is reputed to be an arsonist![barn burner]. As a matter of fact, Jody makes an arrangement with Flem Snopes who promises to keep Ab from burning Varner’s property – provided he gets a job as a clerk in Varner’s store. Again, Faulkner makes use of door imagery in order to show that Flem’s position in the store will have an effect on the Varner family. As Snyder asserts, “once Flem becomes clerk in Varner’s store, Faulkner links his presence with the store’s doorway, and the door itself takes on symbolic significance; it is the ‘door’ through which the Snopeses enter the commercial life of the hamlet and eventually the Varner family” (1989, p.22). This becomes clear in the following excerpt showing Jody and Flem standing together in the door: “then he and the clerk would come to the door and stand in it while Varner finished his instructions and sucked his teeth and departed; when they [the community] looked toward the door, it would be empty” (HAM, p.59). Flem withdraws into the back of the store as if he is already the owner of it – which he manages to become little by little. At the end of Flem’s first week, Will Varner comes to visit his store and his clerk:

> Then at last, on Friday afternoon, Will Varner himself appeared. […]; it was not the clerk [Flem] who now discovered at last whom he was working for, but Will Varner who discovered who was working for

> him. […] [Varner] paused in front of the open door in almost exactly the same attitude of the people themselves, lean, his neck craned a little like a turkey as he looked into the store, […] (HAM, p.59).

Here, Varner himself behaves like some of his fellows who come to see Flem but who do not dare to cross the threshold of the store. After Varner senior orders Flem from outside the store to bring him “a plug of my tobacco”, Flem does as he was told but he does not go back into the store as a clerk is usually expected to do. Instead, he just answers back, “You ain’t paid for it”, and Varner indeed pays his share (HAM, pp.59,60). It seems as if Flem has already taken over Varner’s store.

Whereas *The Hamlet* shows Flem’s gradual ascent from clerk to the owner of Varner’s store, *The Mansion*, on the other hand, portrays Flem’s downfall by the hands of his cousin Mink Snopes. At the end of the novel, Mink takes revenge on his cousin for being sent to prison. He sneaks into Flem’s mansion through the back door, then he is “opening the screen door quietly into the hall and [passes] through it, passing the open door beyond which the woman [Linda] sat, not even glancing toward it; and [he] went on to the next one and drew the pistol from his overall bib; […]. He didn’t need to say, ‘Look at me, Flem’” (MAN, p.1046).

After having murdered his cousin and upon searching for a way to get out of the house, he suddenly sees [Flem’s daughter] Linda standing in the hall barring his way out. Yet to his surprise she is willing to help him get away: ”‘Here. Come and take it. That door is a closet. You’ll have to come back this way to get out’” (MAN, p.1048). With Mink having killed her father, Linda finally got her revenge, too, for she had blamed Flem for the suicide of her mother, Eula Snopes.

Elsewhere in *The Hamlet*, Faulkner shows another variation of the locked door motif. In Ratliff’s nightmarish allegorical account of Flem dispossessing the devil of his own realm, Faulkner uses locked door symbolism in order to show that even for Satan himself there is no chance to deal with a Flem Snopes:

> ‘Who are you?’ he [the devil] says, choking and gasping and his eyes a-popping up at him setting there with that straw suitcase on the Throne among the bright, crown-shaped flames. ‘Take Paradise’ the Prince screams. ‘Take it! Take it’ And the wind roars up and the dark roars down and the Prince scrabbling across the floor, clawing and scrabbling at that locked door, screaming… (HAM, p.170).

Locked door imagery logically occurs in those novels by Faulkner dealing with characters imprisoned in jails as shown, for example, in *A Fable, Intruder in the Dust, If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem* [*The Wild Palms*], and *Requiem for a Nun*. Except for *Requiem for a Nun*, the novels mentioned above employ this facet of the locked door motif only as a minor aspect that is not relevant in this discussion.

Set eight years after the events described in *Sanctuary*, the three-act drama *Requiem for a Nun* shows what has become of Temple Drake, Gowan Stevens, and Nancy Mannigoe. At the very heart of this drama is Nancy's act of murdering Temple and Gowan's six month old infant. Nancy has killed their baby in a final, desperate attempt to prevent Temple from running off with Pete, the thug brother of a gangster she had loved before [Red (murdered by Popeye in *Sanctuary*)]. Even though Temple has pleaded for Nancy's life in the house of the Governor, the black woman is nevertheless sentenced to death for her brutal crime. In the third act of the drama, then, Temple visits the Jefferson jail where she meets Nancy on the very evening before Nancy is going to be executed for her felony:

> The common room, or 'bull-pen'. It is on the second floor [of the jail]. A heavy barred door at left is the entrance to it, […]. The door, left, opens with a heavy clashing of the steel lock, and swings back and outward. Temple enters, followed by Stevens and the Jailor. […]. The Jailor closes the door and locks it on the inside with another clash and clang of steel, and turns. […] […] (there is the clash of another steel door off-stage as the Jailor unlocks Nancy's cell. Temple pauses, turns and listens, then continues rapidly) And now I've got to say 'I forgive you, sister' to the nigger who murdered my baby. No: it's worse: I've even got to transpose it, turn it around. I've got to start off my new life being forgiven again. How can I say that? […] (RFN, pp. 226, 230).

For Temple, the jailor's opening of the doors leading to Nancy's cell is to be confronted with her own guilt and involvement in Nancy's crime. Even after her final talk with Nancy, Temple still has not found answers to all of her questions. Thus, the locked door at the end of the drama that separates Temple from Nancy is not only expressive of Nancy's impending death, but also of Temple's inability to come to terms with her present situation: "They exit. The door closes in, clashes, the clash and clang of the key as the Jailor locks it again; the three pairs of footsteps sound and begin to fade in the outer corridor. Curtain" (RFN, p.245).

In *The Reivers*, the last novel Faulkner was to write, the author again makes use of the locked door motif. In this book, locked door imagery is used to illustrate the adolescent narrator's initiation into the sensation of sex. As soon as the locked door of Miss Reba's brothel had been opened, the fifteen-year-old boy is suddenly confronted with an awareness of something that he could sense but what he could not quite understand for he still lacks any knowledge about sex. When Boon Hogganbeck and the young boy arrive at Miss Reba's brothel, they approach the bordello thus:

> […] we went through the gate and up the walk and into the latticed vestibule, and there was the front door. […] The door opened. […] "Come on in," she [Miss Reba] said. She moved out of the door so we could enter; as soon as we did so, the maid locked the door again. I didn't know why then; maybe that was the way all people in Memphis did, even while they were at home. It was like any other hall, with a stairway going up, only at once I smelled something; the whole house smelled that way. I had never smelled it before. I didn't dislike it; I was just surprised. I mean, as soon as I smelled it, it was like a smell I had been waiting all my life to smell. I think you should be tumbled pell-mell, without warning, only into experience which you might well have spent the rest of your life not having to meet. But with an inevitable (ay, necessary) one, it's not really decent of Circumstance, Fate, not to prepare you first, especially when the preparation is as simple as just being fifteen years old. That was the kind of smell it was (REI, pp.93, 94).

What the locked door encloses within the sphere of the house is in fact the smell of women and, more precisely, the smell of sex [bodily odors], and once the boy had passed the threshold leading into the brothel, he enjoys this smell and never wants to miss it again [i.e. he discovers a strange liking for something that was hitherto unknown to him]. This becomes particularly clear in his remark that he has been waiting for that kind of smell for all of his life.

In *Sanctuary*, Faulkner also links a brothel and its odors to door imagery. When Temple walks through Miss Reba's bordello, she senses a "defunctive odor of irregular food, vaguely alcoholic, and Temple even in her ignorance seemed to be surrounded by a ghostly promiscuity of intimate garments, of discreet whispers of flesh stale and oft-assailed and impregnable beyond each silent door which they passed" (SAN, p.144).

In *The Reivers*, as well as in *The Hamlet*, locked door imagery rather serves humorous purposes. This indicates how Faulkner's novels have changed during the decades. Whereas his earlier novels explore the troublesome life of some alienated characters in conflict with themselves or with their society, Faulkner's later novels are rather humorous and offer a far more optimistic point of view – as, for instance, the Snopes trilogy and particularly *The Reivers* demonstrate. Yet this development is also paralleled in his short story career.

However, Faulkner's skillful handling of door imagery is the result of painstaking efforts to master the use of this image. And, as so often in Faulkner, his short stories provide a key to highlight his growing awareness of how to use a certain motif for very different purposes, as will be seen in the following.

In "The Big Shot" [1930] and "Dull Tale" [1930], for example, the reader is able to see the origin and the development of the "boy-symbol at the door" – the rejection experience that led to Thomas Sutpen's trauma in *Absalom, Absalom!*. In "The Big Shot", to begin with, Faulkner renders the rejection experience of Martin, son of a poor white sharecropper and later owner of a mansion himself, who is sent to the big house of the plantation owner to deliver a message:

> He went to the front door in his patched overalls, his bare feet: he had never been there before; perhaps he knew no better anyway, to whom a house was just where you kept the quilt pallets and the corn meal out of the rain […]. […] Anyway the boss came to the door himself. […] And you can imagine him when the boss spoke: "Don't you ever come to my front door again. When you come here, you go around to the kitchen door and tell one of the niggers what you want." […] There was a negro servant come to the door behind the boss, his eyeballs white in the gloom […]. […] He didn't deliver the message at all. He turned and walked back down the drive, feeling the nigger's teeth too in the gloom of the hall, beyond the boss' shoulder, holding his back straight until he was out of sight of the house (US, p.508).

Like Thomas Sutpen, the main character of this story also comes to the front door of a stately mansion in worn out garments where he is told to use the back door. Unlike *Absalom, Absalom!*, this scene does not emphasize the magnitude and splendor of the big house and fails to render the impression it makes on the boy. In the novel, Sutpen approaches the house like a camera zooming from a long shot

to a close-up: “following the road and turning into the gate and following the drive […] and so to the house, the portico, the front door” (AA, p.185).

In addition, Martin is told to go to the back door by the owner of the big house himself – and not by the black servant who remains hidden in the darkness of the house. In “Dull Tale”, a rewriting of the unsuccessful story “A Big Shot”, Faulkner principally retells the same incident – though a few details are changed:

> One day his father sent him [Martin] up to the big house with a message. He went to the front door. A nigger opened it, one of the few niggers in that country, neighborhood; one of a race whom his kind hated from birth, through suspicion and economic jealousy and, in this case, envy; performing, as his people did, work which niggers would not do, eating food which the niggers at the big house would have scorned. The negro barred the door with his body; while they stood so, the boss himself came up the hall and looked out at the boy in worn overalls. ‘Don’t you ever come to my front door again,’ the boss said, ‘When you come here, go to the back door. Don’t you ever come to my front door again.’ And there was the nigger behind the boss, in the house, grinning behind the boss’ back. He – Martin – told me he could feel the nigger’s white eyeballs on his back as he returned down the drive, without delivering the message, and the nigger’s white teeth cracked with laughing (US, p.536).

Here, Faulkner lays emphasis on the social inequality between the blacks and poor white sharecroppers who hate the blacks because of their better economic and social standing. This disparity clearly heightens the intensity of Martin’s rejection experience. In “Dull Tale”, Martin not only sees himself as being of lower social standing than a Negro, but he also has to accept that a Negro prevents him from entering the house. Interestingly, the behavior of the black servant has changed. In this story, the servant is aware of being superior to the young boy and laughs about him – which clearly contributes to the young boy’s traumatizing moment.

In “Wash” [1933], Faulkner renders a poor white character’s rejection at the *back* door of a mansion. When Wash Jones approaches the kitchen of the Sutpen mansion, he is barred by a black servant who tells him not to enter the house:

> This time it was a house servant, one of the few Negroes who remained; this time the Negress had to retreat up the kitchen steps, where she turned. “Stop right dar, white man. Stop right where you is. You ain’t never crossed these steps whilst Cunnel here, and you ain’t

> ghy' do hit now." This was true. But there was this kind of pride: he had never tried to enter the big house, even though he believed that if he had, Sutpen would have received him, permitted him (CS, p. 537).

Wash, however, cannot accept the fact that he is socially inferior to the Negro servant who tells him to stay put. Instead, he comes up with a phony excuse why he does not even try to enter the mansion any longer: "'But I ain't going to give no black nigger the chance to tell me I can't go nowhere,' he said to himself. 'I ain't even going to give Kernel the chance to have cuss a nigger on my account'" (CS, pp.537, 538). Although Wash is just a squatter living in a fishing shack on Sutpen's estate, he believes he is better than the Negroes who laugh about him. In addition to that, Wash is convinced he has a very close relationship with Sutpen. As Skei remarks in this context, "Wash seems to live under the illusion that he has a particularly close, or at least different relationship to Sutpen than a Negro could ever have, and even though he is worse off than the plantation Negroes, he clings to some sort of pride, be it false or not, […]" (1999, p.211). After the Civil War, however, Wash is finally able to go into the big house because he is the one who takes Sutpen home whenever the old man has drunk way too much liquor:

> He entered the house now. He had been doing so for a long time, taking Sutpen home in whatever borrowed wagon might be, talking him into locomotion with cajoling murmurs as though he were a horse, a stallion himself. The daughter would meet them and hold open the door without a word. He would carry his burden through the once white formal entrance, surmounted by a fanlight imported piece by piece from Europe and with a board now nailed over a missing pane, across a velvet carpet from which all nap was gone now, and up a formal stairs, now but a fading ghost of bare boards between two strips of fading paint, and into the bedroom. It would be dusk by now, and he let his burden sprawl onto the bed and undress it and then he would sit quietly in a chair beside. After a time the daughter would come to the door. "We're all right," he would tell her. "Don't you worry none, Miss Judith" (CS, p.540).

As long as the big house was a place of splendor, Wash was not able to go inside. After Sutpen's estate has lost its majesty and starts to decay, Wash is allowed to enter the house and to keep a vigil while the man he adores and apotheosizes "stirs and groans" in his bed (AA, p.540). Yet Wash is only tolerated in the big house

and not asked to be there as a guest or as a companion. He will always remain a kind of servant because he simply does not belong to the "men of Sutpen's own kind" (CS, p.547). He is a squatter, but not a real friend of Sutpen.

Interestingly, the entrance door of Sutpen's house is of white color. This detail foreshadows the creation of Cassius de Spain's white mansion in "Barn Burning" [1938]. In this well-known story, Faulkner offers an inversion of the barred door motif for Abner Snopes does not accept a 'monkey niggers' denial to enter de Spain's mansion: "The![white] door opened so promptly that the boy [Sarty] knew the Negro must have been watching them all the time, an old man with neat grizzled hair, in a linen jacket, who stood barring the door with his body, […]" (CS, p.11). Of course, Abner ignores the servant and walks straight on into the house with his dirty shoes: "'Get out of my way, nigger,' his father said, without heat too, flinging the door back and the Negro also and entering, his hat still on his head" (CS, p.11). Since the butler is a Negro, Abner pays no attention to him for he knows that the butler cannot stop him. At the time the story takes place, a black man in the South was not allowed to touch a white person. Although the butler forbade entry, Abner nevertheless enters the house while the butler helplessly watches as Abner smears a valuable rug with dirty shoes. Ab needs to ignore the black servant because it is the only way of retaining his self-esteem and dignity. Although the black servant is clearly of better economic and social standing than this poor white sharecropper, Abner still feels superior to the black servant because the color of his own skin is white.

The image of a barred front door also occurs in "A Rose for Emily". Here, Miss Emily's way out is barred by her possessive and authoritarian father who has driven away all the young men who courted her: "Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her […], the two of them framed by the back-flung front door" (CS, p.123). Since Miss Emily was not able to establish fruitful relationships with her townsfolk, she lived alone in her house with the front door closed to the public. However, when the new Board of Aldermen tried to collect taxes from her in 1916, they "knocked at the [front] door through which no visitor had passed since she ceased giving china-painting lessons eight or ten years earlier" (CS, 120).

While the spokesman of this deputation was stating his errand, Miss Emily "stood in the door [connecting the hall with the parlor] and listened quietly" to his request (CS, p.121). In a way imitative of her own father, Miss Emily is standing inside the doorway in order to express her refusal to communicate with the new representatives of the town. She does not enter the room and keeps her distance to these men for she does not esteem them as the new city authorities. This is why she says: "'See Colonel Sartoris.' (Colonel Sartoris had been dead almost ten years.) 'I have no taxes in Jefferson […]'" before she asks her servant to "'show these gentlemen out'" (CS, p.121).

This ever barred front door is eventually the driving force that attracts especially the female villagers to come to Miss Emily's funeral: "[…], the women mostly out of curiosity to see the inside of her house, which no one save an old manservant […] had seen in at least ten years" (CS, p.119). After her death, the villagers not only enter Miss Emily's house without her explicit permission, they also break down the door leading to the room which contains the rotted remains of Homer Barron: "[…] there was a room in that region above stairs which no one had seen in forty years, and which would have to be forced. […] The violence of breaking down the door seemed to fill this room with pervading dust" (CS, p.129).

In "Vendée", the fifth story of *The Unvanquished*, Faulkner links door imagery to an act of violence. After having shot Miss Rosa's murderer, Bayard and Ringo nail his corpse to the door of the old cotton press: "'When me [Uncle Buck] and John Sartoris and Drusilla rode up to that old compress, the first thing we see was that murdering scoundrel pegged put on the door to it like a coon hide, all except the right hand. And if anybody wants to see that too, […], just let them ride into Jefferson and look on Rosa Millard's grave!'" (UNV, p.186). This door, barred by the murderer of Miss Rosa, serves as a "warning to all the Grumbys plaguing the defeated confederacy" (Volpe 2001, p.82). Bayard thus shows what is going to happen to all those scavengers who terrorize women and widows.

As shown in the discussion of the short stories above, the image of a front door barred by a character is a recurrent motif in Faulkner's fiction. Yet Faulkner does not employ this motif only for the sake of rendering a rejection experience or to show a character's separation from society – the image of a barred door is also

used in a number of short stories to highlight a character's inability to react or to come to terms with a difficult situation.

In "Lo!", President Jackson finds himself besieged by a couple of Indians who camp within the very spheres of the White House in order to recover rights to a disputed ford on their Mississippi land. Even though Andrew Jackson "achieved sufficient national prominence as an Indian fighter" (Volpe 2004, p.188), this short story shows him as a weak and indecisive character who does not even dare to open up a door that separates him from the deputation of Chickasaw Indians:

> The President stood motionless at the door of the Dressing Room, fully dressed save for his boots. […] Now he stood just inside the door to the corridor, utterly motionless in his stockings, […]. Hanging from his hand, low against his flank, was a hand mirror of elegant French design, […]. At last he put his hand on the knob and opened the door infinitesimally; beneath his hand the door crept by inches and without any sound; still with that infinitesimal silence he put his eye to the crack and saw, […]. Now that the door was open he could hear the voices too. Still without any sound, with that infinite care, he raised and advanced the mirror. For an instant he caught his own reflection in it and he paused for a time and with a kind of cold unbelief he examined his own face – the face of the shrewd and courageous fighter, of that wellnigh infallible expert in the anticipation and controlling of man and his doings, overlaid now with the baffled helplessness of a child. […]. The President withdrew the mirror and closed the door quietly (CS, pp.381, 383).

Interestingly, this President of the United States, one of the highest representatives of Western society's patriarchal order, utilizes a female object to see what is going on in his very own house. Thus, it is little surprising that the Indians declare, "[…] You don't understand white people. They are like children: you have to handle them careful because you never know what they are going to do next" (CS, p.383). Since "Lo!" is principally a trickster tale and thus in the humorous vein, Faulkner employs door imagery here for the mere sake of fun.

In "That Evening Sun", on the other hand, door imagery is instrumental in rendering the dreadful situation of Nancy. In the third and fourth section of that story, Nancy frantically tries to make the Compson children stay within her cabin for she knows that Jesus will not do her any harm as long as the children are with her. When Nancy tells the Compson kids a fairy tale about a queen who "had to

cross the ditch to get into her house quick and bar the door" (CS, p.303), she merges her own fear and situation with the fairy tale she wants to narrate. It is thus not surprising that Nancy's tale is rather confusing than entertaining: "'Why did she want to go home and bar the door?' Caddy said" (CS, p.303). With the arrival of Mr. Compson, who comes to fetch his children, Nancy realizes that she will be bereft of all that might protect her from her husband: "'[…] When yawl walk out that door, I gone'" (CS, p.307).

Despite Mr. Compson's advice to close the door and to put the bar up, Nancy remains inactive. The story thus ends with the powerful image of Nancy sitting alone before her fire with the cabin door wide open: "We went up out of the ditch. We could still see Nancy's house and the open door, but we couldn't see Nancy now, sitting before the fire with the door open, because she was tired. 'I just done got tired,' she said. 'I just a nigger. It ain't no fault of mine'" (CS, p.309). Confusing tiredness with the abandonment of hope, the Compsons remain insensitive to Nancy's plight and desert her in a moment of terror when she was terribly in need of their aid and support. For Nancy, then, the open door is a symbol of impending death. When she comes to the decision to leave her door open, she shows that she has given up hope and waits to get killed by her husband.

In "Elly" and "The Brooch", Faulkner uses doors as a monitoring device, which enables an authority figure to have full control over another character. In "Elly", the title character has to pass the *open* door of her grandmother's bedroom almost every night, where the old woman is waiting for Elly to go into her room – all alone and just in time:

> […] [Elly] would enter the dark house and look up at the single square of light which fell upon the upper hallway, and change completely. Wearily now, with the tread almost of an old woman, she would mount the stairs and pass the open door of the lighted room where her grandmother sat, erect, an open book in her hands, facing the hall. Usually she did not look into the room when she passed. But now and then she did. Then for an instant they would look full at one another: the old woman cold, piercing; the girl weary, spent, her face, her dark diluted eyes, filled with impotent hatred. Then she would go on and enter her own room and lean for a time against the door, hearing the grandmother's light click off presently, […], whispering, "The old bitch. The old bitch" (CS, pp.208, 209).

Even the mere prospect of the open door is able to make Elly change completely. Before she enters the house, Elly is "alert, cool, already fled, without moving, beyond some secret reserve of laughter", but when she is within the house, she assumes qualities that render her as a double of her grandmother ["tread almost of an old woman"] (CS, p.208).

Since the old woman is almost deaf, she cannot hear her granddaughter mounting the stairs. This is why she needs to have the door open to see Elly entering her room. For Elly, on the other hand, this open door is a symbol of repression because there is no chance to pass this doorway without being seen. Inside her own room, Elly closes her door and leans against it for a while – which is an apt image to express Elly's indecision and inability to come to terms with her tangled situation. However, things change after Elly has spent an evening with Paul de Montigny. When she enters the building after he has left her, "she did not look in when she passed her grandmother's door [and] neither did she lean against her own door to cry" (CS, p.210). Being told that Paul is suspected of having black blood, Elly is in a state of exultation because she has found a tool to rebel against her grandmother [i.e. having sex with a Negro]. On a metaphorical plane, then, she does not have to lean against her door anymore in order to feel better.

Yet after an abortive attempt to have sexual intercourse with Paul [the grandmother has discovered them when they were in a clump of shrubbery], Elly rushes into her room, again "leaning against the door, trying to still her breathing, [while] listening for the grandmother to mount the stairs and go to her father's room [to tell him about Elly's promiscuity]. But the old woman's footsteps ceased at her own door" (CS, p.211). Here, Elly again needs the closed door as a means to calm down and to find comfort because she is afraid that her grandmother is going to tell her parents about her amorous adventure with Paul. In the light of this, Elly needs to substitute the door with a real person she can lean on – for what she utterly lacks is somebody else to depend on for support and encouragement.

The grandmother, however, refrains from telling Elly's parents about their daughter's actions, while Elly, on the other hand, feels forced to explain her deviating behavior and thus confronts her grandma with the emptiness in her life: "Her grandmother's door was closed. When she opened it, the old woman was

sitting up in bed, reading a newspaper; she looked up, cold, still, implacable, while Elly screamed at her in the empty house: 'What else can I do, in this little, dead, hopeless town? […]'" (CS, p.212).

It is striking that the grandmother's door is closed during the day but open late in the evening. This detail makes clear that the open door is the old woman's most important device to keep control over her granddaughter's doings.

At the end of the story, shortly before the fatal car crash, Elly does not need to lean against a closed door any longer in order to feel better because she has indeed substituted the door with a real person: "She leaned against him [Paul], shaking slowly, holding him" (CS, p.220). Since she has chosen Paul to kill her grandmother in a car crash, Elly has found a way to come to terms with her affairs. Without her grandma living any longer, Elly believes she will be free and independent. This is why she is determined to make Paul kill the old woman.

In "The Brooch", by contrast, Faulkner employs a *closed* door as an image to convey parental oppression of a young married couple. In a situation very similar to "Elly", Howard Boyd has to pass his mother's bedroom at the bottom of the stairs in order to go to his room upstairs. Like Elly's grandmother, Howard's mother is monitoring him and takes notice of everything that is going on in the house. Unlike Elly's grandmother, who has her door wide open in order to see Elly [because of her dead hearing], Mrs. Boyd is perfectly able to hear her son entering or leaving the house while her bedroom door remains closed:

> So presently the son had acquired some skill in entering the house and passing the door beyond which his mother lay propped in bed, and mounting the stairs in the dark to his own room. But one night he failed to do so. When he entered the house the transom above his mother's door was dark, as usual, and even if it had not been he could not have known that this was the afternoon on which the mother's friends had called and told her about Amy, and that his mother had lain for five hours, propped bolt upright, in the darkness, watching the invisible door. He entered quietly as usual, his shoes in his hand, yet he had not even closed the front door when she called his name. […] He opened the door. "Come closer," she said. He came nearer. They looked at one another. Then he seemed to know; perhaps he had been expecting it (CS, p.649).

Being informed that her son was seen with a woman of lower social standing, Mrs. Boyd tells Howard not to “confuse the house with the stable” (CS, p.650). As a result, Howard defies her and asks this woman [Amy] to marry him:

> He stepped back and jerked the door open with something of his father’s swaggering theatricalism. “With your permission,” he said. He did not close the door. She lay bolt upright on the pillows and looked into the dark hall and listened to him go to the telephone, call the girl, and ask her to marry him tomorrow. Then he reappeared at the door. “With your permission,” he said again, with that swaggering reminiscence of his father, closing the door (CS, p.650).

But due to Howard’s pathological attachment to his grotesque mother, the young couple soon has to face severe marital problems. As a result of their troublesome situation, Amy misses fun in her life and goes out to dances all by herself – with Howard’s explicit permission. In order to prevent Howard’s mother from finding out that Amy leaves the house, the couple invents a scheme to fool her. This is why Howard is going downstairs with Amy and then sneaking back into his room:

> So, on Saturday nights Amy would dress and Howard put on scarf and overcoat, […], and they would descend the stairs and stop at Mrs. Boyd’s door and then Howard would put Amy into the car and watch her drive away. Then he would re-enter the house and with his shoes in his hand return up the stairs, as he had used to do before they married, slipping past the lighted transom. Just before midnight, in the overcoat and scarf again, he would slip back down the stairs and past the still lighted transom and be waiting on the porch when Amy drove up. Then they would enter the house and look into Mrs. Boyd’s room and say good night (CS, p.652).

Of course, Howard and Amy are not able to fool the old woman for too long. One evening, then, Mrs. Boyd finally learns that Amy has left her house all by herself:

> “[…] Her light was already on. I [Amy] knew as soon as I opened the front door that we were sunk. I hadn’t even got in the house good when she said ‘Amy’ and I said ‘It’s me, Mother’ and she said ‘Come in here, please,’ and there she was with those eyes that haven’t got any edges to them and that hair that looks like somebody pulled it out of the middle of a last year’s cotton bale, and she said, ‘Of course you understand that you will have to leave this house at once. Good night’” (CS, p.658).

Although Amy expects Howard to leave the house, he refuses to go with her for he cannot leave his mother behind. To set an end to this wicked situation, Howard finally kills himself [see also chapter 6.1.3]. Despite its flaws, "The Brooch" is nevertheless an interesting story because it shows Faulkner's use of doors as metaphors for a trapped character.

A completely different use of door imagery is to be found in the short story "Red Leaves" for here do private houses lack doors at all. This is also the final example of door imagery in Faulkner's writings to be analyzed in this discussion.

When the two Indians, Three Basket and Louis Berry, approach the slave quarter in order to get Issetibbeha's missing body servant so that he might be killed and buried with the chief and search all the cabins for him, the reader is told that there "were no doors at all" (CS, p.316). This underscores the fact that the Indians' keep their slaves like stock. For one thing, the lack of doors denies the Indians any degree of privacy within their cabins and, as likewise experienced by Jesus in "That Evening Sun", the slaves cannot keep their owners from entering their dwellings whenever it pleases them. The image of a door-less cabin is thus used to mirror the gross imbalance of power between the Indians and the slaves.

With regard to the two questions raised at the beginning of this chapter, this discussion of the use of doors in Faulkner's writings demonstrates that doors are important literary devices serving various purposes. To summarize this chapter, the use of door imagery allows the author to control the flow of the narration and to reveal or conceal as much information as necessary [*Absalom, Absalom!, Sanctuary*]. Doors in Faulkner can be empty, open, closed, locked, or barred by another character. If doors are barred, they will be insurmountable barriers that prevent a character from approaching a truth or from getting in or out of a house or a room, for instance. This aspect deserves to be analyzed in more detail.

Male characters mostly block front doors to prevent other male characters from getting into the house [Mr. Grierson, Thomas Sutpen, door servants] while female characters, by contrast, usually close or bar doors to keep younger [mostly] female characters from experiencing either a truth or sexual adventures. This is especially apparent in Faulkner's rendering of Miss Rosa. Miss Rosa was twice hindered by other female characters who barred her from entering private spaces.

Miss Rosa was first barred by Judith Sutpen when she tried to enter the room containing the dead body of Charles Bon and then, many years later, she could not open up the front door leading into the Sutpen house [the door was locked by Clytemnestra, Henry Sutpen's mulatto sister, to keep other people away from him].

If front doors are barred by male characters, Faulkner often refers to class distinctions. This becomes clear if one considers the rejection experience suffered by young Sutpen and feared by Wash Jones who has not dared to enter Sutpen's house through the front door. Although Ab Snopes is ignorant of the black servant who tries to keep him from entering the house, he is nevertheless well aware that this black man is clearly of higher social and economic standing than Ab himself.

If front doors are barred by female characters, by contrast, Faulkner mostly refers to the physical and psychological entrapment of adolescent characters.

For Elly, the open door leading to her grandma's bedroom is a symbol of repression. Howard, on the other hand, has to pass his mother's closed doors as quiet as possible to cover up what is really going on within her house.

Sometimes, characters are shown as standing inside a door or being framed by a door. This aspect refers specifically to the spaces within a house. Popeye, for instance, is recurrently presented in the act of barring doors for Temple while at the same time doors always seem to be open up to him. In this context, however, it is important to note that doors can be used as a symbolic representation of the female sexual organ – as shown in the analysis of *Sanctuary*. According to this, one has to see the detail that doors are always open for Popeye in a different light for it underscores the sexual dimension connected with this [impotent!] character.

In view of these facts, it becomes apparent why door imagery has become a crucial part of Faulkner's writings. Since the purpose of door imagery depends on the words the author has chosen, one has to distinguish between several adjectives, prepositions and verbs that frequently occur in connection with doors in Faulkner's novels and short stories.

The table on the following page shows the frequency of some selected words linked with the noun "door" in Faulkner. Due to the fact that there are still no concordances available for *Soldier's Pay, Mosquitoes,* and *Flags in the Dust*, this table does not offer any statistical data for these novels.

Table 2: Some frequent co-occurrences of the noun "door".

| **Novels:** | **in the door / inside the door** | **open door / unlocked door** | **empty door** | **barred door / blocked door** | **closed door / locked door** | **framed in / by a door** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *The Sound and the Fury* | 18 | 36 | - | - | 20 | - |
| *As I Lay Dying* | 5 | - | 1 | - | 4 | - |
| *Sanctuary* | 25 | 16 | - | - | 15 | 3 |
| *Light in August* | 25 | 24 | - | 1 | 25 | - |
| *Pylon* | 2 | 23 | - | 1 | 14 | - |
| *Absalom, Absalom!* | - | 5 | - | 3 | 18 | - |
| *The Unvanquished* | 10 | 8 | - | 1 | 7 | - |
| *The Wild Palms* | 6 | 25 | - | - | 15 | - |
| *The Hamlet* | 12 | 14 | 2 | 4 | 12 | 1 |
| *Go Down, Moses* | 10 | 13 | - | 4 | 11 | - |
| *Intruder in the Dust* | 3 | 23 | 1 | 1 | 14 | - |
| *Requiem for a Nun* | 2 | 19 | 1 | 4 | 17 | - |
| *A Fable* | 7 | 50 | - | - | 30 | 1 |
| *The Town* | 11 | 28 | - | - | 15 | - |
| *The Mansion* | 10 | 25 | - | 1 | 17 | - |
| *The Reivers* | 5 | 13 | - | - | 18 | - |
| *Collected Stories* | 24 | 59 | 1 | 8 | 40 | 3 |

This table makes evident that there are more references to open or unlocked doors (382) in Faulkner's texts than to closed or locked doors (292). In *Absalom, Absalom!*, by contrast, doors are rather locked than being open. This

emphasizes the prison-like quality of some houses employed as a setting in this novel. Faulkner's doorways are seldom empty (only six times). Instead, they are rather barred of blocked (28), or obstructed by characters standing either in or inside a door or doorway (175). In addition, doors frame a character only eight times throughout all of his texts. Interestingly, there are no great statistical differences between the novels and the short stories concerning the use of doors linked with related vocabulary. Nevertheless, door imagery in Faulkner's novels is rendered as a far more complex and multifaceted symbol system than in his stories – as seen in the discussion of the door motif in *Sanctuary* and *Absalom, Absalom!*

It is striking that Faulkner rarely uses door imagery in connection with black characters. As will be seen in the analysis of window imagery in the next chapter too, door related imagery is predominantly linked to white characters. The only exception to this recurrent pattern in Faulkner's writings is Nancy Mannigoe [besides the anonymous "monkey niggers" who are of minor importance in this context]. Nancy twice has to face impending death connected with door imagery in Faulkner's writings. In "That Evening Sun", she knows that her cabin door cannot protect her from her vindictive husband whom she fears might come to kill her. In *Requiem for a Nun*, there remain no uncertainties whether Nancy is going to die or not since the very door that closes behind her at the end of the play clearly indicates that she is about to be executed.

In *Absalom, Absalom!*, door imagery is also connected with the use of porches. It is thus not very surprising that Sutpen's rejection experience was located on a portico – which as a symbol of upper class dwellings intensifies the significance of the front door as an entrance for the very distinguished. Here, it becomes clear how architectural features merge to achieve a certain effect.

Moreover, the image of the barred door in *Absalom, Absalom!*, is also used to render racial segregation. Since Sutpen's firstborn son has partly Negro blood, his father cannot acknowledge him and thus denies him entrance into his very own house. As a consequence, Charles Bon has to suffer a similar traumatic rejection experience like the one that has haunted Thomas Sutpen for the rest of his life. Both of them will never be able to pass their metaphorically blocked doors, then.

Basically, doors are necessary devices to separate private spheres from public spaces. Faulkner utilizes this fact, for example, in his rendering of the ever-closed front door of Miss Emily's house. For Miss Emily, an open door leading to the modern world of 20th century Jefferson is virtually an affront to her dignity. She closes the front door for good and creates a private sphere within which time ceases to exist [as rendered in the symbol of her invisible watch].

It becomes clear, then, that the principal aims of doors in Faulkner's writings are, on the one hand, to render a character's inclusion or exclusion and, on the other hand, to describe a character's attempt of intruding a house or a body.

Whereas windows merely serve visual purposes, door imagery in Faulkner is sometimes also connected with sound and audibility [as already indicated in the discussion of door imagery in *Sanctuary* above]. The following survey lists some randomly chosen examples of Faulkner's use of doors linked with sounds:

| **Novels:** | **Short Stories:** |
|---|---|
| A door creaked open; (SAN, p.82)<br>She took up the coat and hat and listened again at the door (SAN, p.89)<br>'Open the door,' he said. There was no sound (SAN, p.101)<br>She rose quietly and went to the door and listened again (SAN, p.226)<br>Van banged the door open and they entered (SAN, p.73)<br>The released door yawned and clapped against the jamb, but it made no sound either; it was as though sound and silence had become inverted (SAN, p.102)<br>'That sound was merely the sharp and final clap-to of a door between us and all that was […]' (AA, p.127) | "Dry September":<br>The screen door crashed open (CS, p.171)<br>"All the Dead Pilots":<br>The screen door crashed behind them reverberant in the dead air (CS, p.173)<br>There was a second door at the head of the stairs. He stopped before it, listening (CS, p.523)<br>[…], when he reached the opposite door […], he could hear the silence in the next room (CS, p.524)<br>"Artist at Home":<br>He got there just in time to have the door banged in his face (CS, p.639)<br>'Blind! Blind!' she said beyond the door (CS p.639)<br>"The Brooch":<br>[…] he would […] open and close the front door noisily […] (CS, p.653) |

In the same way as doors permit or deny entrance and thus control and regulate the inner spaces of a house, so gates fulfill a very similar task: they allow ingress into or egress from the outer spaces of a house [see chapter 6.3.5].

### 6.3.3 Windows

Another crucial device of Faulkner is the use of the window motif in many of his writings. The recurrent nature of this literary motif in both his short stories and novels is statistically evidenced by the concordances to his works, as indicated by the table on page three. Faulkner's window imagery is expressive of the way his characters think, feel, or act. In this respect, Williamson asserts that in Faulkner, "doors and doorframes, windows and window frames became especially important. His characters were forever looking in or looking out, crawling in or crawling out of windows" (1995, p.413). Noel Polk characterizes the significance of window symbolism in Faulkner's writings as follows:

> Time and time again, often at crucial moments in their lives, characters in Faulkner stand at windows looking out, immobilized in that frame, an icon of impotence and frustration. Some escape *through* those windows into sexual experiences [...], others feel a certain comfort and security being on the inside and not having to face the life outside [...]. But those who do escape feel ambivalent because leaving and returning through the window is a transgressive act that puts them at odds with all that the "house" represents of law and moral prohibition. To transgress, to be free, is to inflict guilt upon yourself and to deny yourself the relative stability of life within the house; to stay inside is no better because you want to be, but cannot stand to be, outside, untethered from the security that the house provides. Those who escape through the window do so because doors are closed and not transparent: they cannot see through them but must be content with merely hearing what transpires in the next room (1999, p.31).

Indeed, many a Faulkner character is indeed either framed by a window or portrayed in the act of climbing through a window in order to escape an oppressive home, as the following analysis shows.

When asked about the origins of *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner answers that the basic outline of this book "began with the picture of the little girl's muddy drawers, climbing that tree to look in the parlor window with her brothers that didn't have the courage to climb the tree waiting to see what she saw" (FIU, p.1) In another interview, Faulkner answers that Caddy was the only one brave enough to "look in the forbidden window to see what was going on" (FIU, p.31).

The lighted parlor window makes the nosy Compson children believe that their parents are entertaining guests. When Caddy climbs the tree to look into the "forbidden window", she does not see merrymaking people but, instead, her dead grandmother being prepared for her funeral. The parlor window is thus a symbolic threshold that initiates Caddy into the fact that every person has to die someday.

On the other hand, the window of her own room will introduce her into the mysteries of sex when she secretly climbs through that window in order to be with her lovers. In 1928, Caddy's daughter [Miss] Quentin likewise escapes from the Compson house for good while climbing out of her window and down the same tree from where Caddy was once looking at her dead grandma:

> Here she [Miss Quentin] come, he said. Be quiet, now. We went to the window and looked out. It came out of [Miss] Quentin's window and across into the tree. We watched the tree shaking. The shaking went down the tree, then it came out and we watched it go away across the grass. Then we couldn't see it (SF, p.47).

In the opening chapter of *Light in August*, Lena Grove also gets away from her home through a window in order to search for the father of her unborn child – although there is no need for Lena to leave her home in secret, as the text shows:

> She [Lena] slept in a leanto room at the back of the house. It had a window which she learned to open and close again in the dark without making a sound […]. She could have departed by the door, by day-light. Nobody would have stopped her. Perhaps she knew that. But she chose to go by night, and through the window (LIA, pp.5, 6)

In contrast to Lena, Joe Christmas has to climb secretly through the window of his foster parents' house whenever he wants to see his girl because his foster father McEachern would beat him if he knew about Joe's sexual adventures:

> Moving quietly, he took the rope from its hiding place. One end of it was already prepared for making fast inside the window. Now it took him no time at all to reach the ground and to return; now, with more than a year of practice, he could mount the rope hand over hand, without touching the wall of the house, with the shadowlike agility of a cat. […] Then, […], he slid down the rope, passing swift as a shadow across the window where the old people slept. The rope hung directly before the window (LIA p.170).

In chapter twelve of this novel, Faulkner virtually presents a reversal of this motif because Joe is now forced by Joanna Burden "to climb into a window to come to her" to have sexual intercourse with her (LIA, p.259). Although Joe is no longer under the influence and control of his foster father McEachern, he still has to climb through a window in order to be with a woman – for it is Joanna's explicit desire that he enters her bedroom through the window.

In *The Hamlet*, Faulkner offers a humorous variation of this motif when he once again shows how a young woman escapes through a window in order to have sex with a man of whom "all the women said he would make a poor husband":

> Nevertheless, Alison Hoake climbed out a second storey window one night. There was no ladder, no drainpipe, no rope of knotted sheets. They said she jumped and McCarron caught her in his arms and they vanished for ten days and returned, McCarron walking, his fine teeth exposed though the rest of his face took no part in the smile, into the room where old Hoake had sat for ten days now with a loaded shotgun across his lap (HAM, p.149).

Since the door was barred by old Hoake himself, the girl had to use the window to get away. In the end, old Hoake's shotgun indeed made a decent husband and son-in-law of him.

Another male character leaving his home through a window in order to be with the opposite sex is Pete Grier in "Two Soldiers" – as his younger brother remarks when he imitates Pete's leaving the house in secret: "So I taken my shoes and drapped them out the window, and then I clumb out like I used to watch Pete do when he was still jest seventeen and pap held that he was too young yet to be tomcatting around at night, and wouldn't leave him out, […]" (CS, p.88).

In addition to that, Pete and his brother also visit a neighboring house every night where they stand underneath a window listening to a radio in order to hear news about the war [WWII.]. The neighbor's window is thus an important means that connects the boys with the larger world:

> […] we would stand outside Old Man Killegrew's parlor window, and we could hear it because Old Man Killegrew's wife was deaf, and so he run the radio as loud as it would run, and so me and Pete could hear it plain as Old Man Killegrew's wife could, I reckon, even standing outside with the window closed (CS, p.81).

As demonstrated above, quite a number of characters use an open window as an escape from an oppressive home. Characters such as Lena, Caddy, and Miss Quentin simply ignore the locked doors of their parents' house and use an open window to take part in the world outside. For these characters, the open window is expressive of their yearning to be free and independent. They deny the stability and security as provided by their homes and thereby oppose parental orders.

In contrast to those characters, however, Gail Hightower is rendered as a passive character who sits every evening at his study window from where he is monitoring the street: "But any day you pass along there about dusk or nightfall, you can see him sitting in the window. Just sitting there. The rest of the time folks wont hardly see him around the place at all, except now and then working in his garden" (LIA, pp.59, 60). Like Miss Amelia in *The Ballad of the Sad Café*, Hightower has long since ceased to be an active participant of the village's communal life – even though Hightower was once a minister of the Presbyterian church of Jefferson. Since it was known that he had tolerated his wife's adultery, the community has begun to ostracize him [see chapter 6.2.5]. Yet Hightower's social situation becomes even worse after his wife has committed suicide:

> It was Sunday morning's paper which they saw, telling how she had jumped or fallen from a hotel window in Memphis Saturday night, and was dead. There had been a man in the room with her. He was arrested. He was drunk. They were registered as man and wife, under a fictitious name (LIA p.67).

Hightower's wife was no longer able to endure the terrible life she had to face in Jefferson. The community avoided her and her husband remained blind to her dreadful situation. Thus she saw no alternative and jumped from the window of a hotel room. After her suicide, Hightower had to give up ministering and he was asked to leave the town – an order he strictly refused to obey. As a result, he has been an outcast of the Jefferson community for more than twenty-five years, and the study window became his sole connection with the outside world. As Ohashi points out, the study window is an important framework that indicates Hightower's mental state: "a human mind closed in and estranged from the outside world by a symbolic window, a boundary line between inner world and

outer" (1985, p.121). Obsessed with the past and caught in his inner world, Hightower can merely observe but not participate in the communal life of his town. This study window thus frames a lonely, estranged, and frustrated character.

Yet Hightower is not the only estranged character who observes what is going on beyond his windows. Meadowfill, an old grouch who refuses to sell his grounds to Flem Snopes, is recurrently referred to as being observing his garden from his window. Unlike Hightower, old Meadowfill is neither obsessed with the past nor introspective – he merely waits behind his window to see Res Snopes' hog appear in his garden for which he wants to get a pound fee [see chapter 6.3.5].

In addition to old Meadowfill, there are some more characters in the Snopes trilogy who keep something or somebody else under surveillance. Gowan Stevens, for one thing, believes that his uncle [Gavin Stevens] monitors the house of Flem and Eula Snopes in order to catch "Mr. de Spain climbing in or out of the back window" (TOW, p.395). Thus, Gowan spends "every afternoon for almost a week in the big ditch behind Mr. Snopes' house, not watching the house but to see if Uncle Gavin was hid somewhere in the ditch too watching to see who called on Mrs. Snopes next" (TOW, p.395). In this case, Faulkner supplements the motif of a character who is secretly observing a window with an additional character who tries to see what the other character is looking for. It has to be noted that the text remains ambiguous whether Gavin Stevens actually was in the ditch or rather not. It might also be, however, just a strange idea that occurred to the then thirteen-year old narrator of this chapter, Charles Mallison.

Another character observing the [former de Spain and now] Snopes house is Luther Biglin, self-appointed guardian of Flem who thinks that Snopes will make him rich if he saves him from Mink. In *The Mansion,* the reader is told that Biglin stands "motionless and silent against the hedge facing the window where, […], Snopes spent all his life […]" (MAN, p.1042). Unfortunately, Biglin's falls asleep at exactly the same time when Mink appears at the house in or order to kill his kin. Yet before Mink enters the mansion, he first observes what Flem is doing within his building: "Just to be sure, he would circle the house until he could see the lighted upper windows on the other side and had already started around the back […] and look in the next window, the next room" (MAN, pp.1044, 1045).

Having Flem’s guardian fall asleep while the killer arrives at his house is typical of Faulkner’s very own sense of humor. Though surveillance is recurrently linked to the window motif, window imagery serves far more purposes. Windows are also used to render a character’s voluntarily inclusion or forced exclusion.

In *The Hamlet*, for instance, Faulkner uses window frames as a tool to illustrate the isolation of a character. As Ratliff sees Eula framed in the window of Varner’s house the night the spotted horses escape, she is described as follows:

> She did not lean out, she merely stood there, full in the moon, apparently blank-eyed or certainly not looking downward at them [Ratliff et al] – the heavy gold hair, the mask not tragic and perhaps not even doomed; just damned, the strong faint lift of breasts beneath the marblelike fall of the garment; to those below what Brunhilde, what Rhinemaiden on what spurious river-rock of papier-mache, what Helen returned to what topless and shoddy Argos, waiting for no one. “Evening, Mrs. Snopes,” Ratliff said. “We want Uncle Will. […]”. She vanished from the window (HAM, p.338).

In this description, the narrator emphasizes Eula’s statuesque appearance. Her face has become an expressionless mask that hides “the despair and frustration she must feel” (Snyder 1989, p.26). Standing motionless like a statue in the window frame, Eula has indeed become what Polk calls an “icon of frustration and impotence” (1998, p.31). Although Faulkner does not reveal much about Eula’s inner life, this brief moment of her standing silently in the window gives an astute account of her loneliness and desperation. In addition, it is striking that several characters are watching Eula in her moonlit window while Eula herself does not see them at all. Like Quentin and Hightower, she does not perceive the world outside her window because the window is merely a frame for an introspective reflection. Adams also considers Faulkner’s statuesque description of Eula and he states that the “marble-statue image” in this scene gives “appropriate emphasis to the betrayal of [Eula’s] fertility”. Moreover, the function of this frame is to stop motion. “It serves as a contrast to the [spotted] horses, which directly represent the energy of life” (Adams 1973, p.118). Adams’ statement is significant for it lays emphasis on Faulkner’s concept of stasis and motion – a motif that is recurrently employed throughout all of Faulkner’s writings.

Used as a frame, windows serve as a tableau that conveys in a brief moment the inner life of a particular character. The moment of stasis is therefore useful to give a description of a human character. According to Zink, the moment of stasis [also referred to as arrested motion] is a "freezing of time and motion in order that a certain quality of the human experience may be held and contemplated" (1956, p.291). In the second chapter of book two of *The Hamlet*, Faulkner offers another striking example of arrested motion in combination with the use of window imagery when Ratliff ponders about Eula's face he saw framed in a train window,

> […]; the calm beautiful mask seen once more beyond a moving pane of glass, then gone. […]; and now as he watched, the lost calm face vanished. It went fast; it was as if the moving glass were in retrograde, it too merely a part, a figment, of the concentric flotsam and jetsam of the translation, and there remained only the straw bag, the minute tie, the constant jaw: […] (HAM, p.166).

In retrospect, Ratliff imagines that the "calm and beautiful mask" of Eula's face behind the windowpane has slightly vanished and then faded into that of Flem Snopes. As Zink remarks, "the [window] glass seems to have served here as a lens for abstracting the real moral issue out of the 'concentric flotsam and jetsam of the translation' that the marriage has wrought in Frenchman's Bend." Thus, Ratliff's imagination highlights that the problem of the community is not the loss of Eula, but rather the potential evil that Flem represents. Furthermore, Zink adds: "the pane of glass is a means of penetrating the complexity of human experience and touching on reality" (1956, pp.297, 298).

Whenever Faulkner frames his characters in a window, he does so in order to offer his readers a brief moment of reverie and insight into the minds of his characters. In this respect, some window frames serve as "impervious barriers", as Morell calls them in her analysis of Faulkner's short story "Miss Zilphia Gant". For Morell, these impervious barriers signify an "absolute distinction between the interior world of the imagination and the blunt reality of the world outside" (1975, p.305). If used as a frame, these windows will set the inner world of a character in contrast to the real world outside. Thus, window imagery enables Faulkner to give a vivid picture of a character's isolation or alienation from his or her society.

Faulkner's use of window symbolism is particularly evident in a number of short stories written between 1929 and 1930. In "Miss Zilphia Gant", for example, window imagery is used to render Zilphia's isolation and separation from society:

> The rear window [of her room] gave upon a vacant lot where farmers tethered their teams on market days and where sparrows whirled in gusty clouds about the horse and mule droppings and the refuse from the grocery store beneath. The window was barred and in it for seven years before the county Health Officer forced Mrs. Gant to let Zilphia go to school, the farmers, hitching or unhitching, would see a wan face watching at them, or, holding to the bars, coughing: a weak hacking sound soon blown away along the air, leaving the still pale face as before with something about it of that quality of Christmas wreaths in a forgotten window (US, p.371).

Again, Faulkner contrasts images of motion with images of stasis. Caught behind her barred window, Zilphia motionlessly watches what city life the window offers to her. Yet Zilphia is both a seeing subject and an object to be seen. Whereas Zilphia watches through the window to see what is going on in the city, the villagers outside can merely see the framed face of a sad and lonely girl. Even though this window was not barred after the school incident any longer, Zilphia has been behind that window for twelve years – watching whatever comes into her vision. Thus, she is able to see what other people experience and she learns what she is missing in her life: "Through it [the window] she watched the children with whom she had gone to school begin to fall into inevitable pairs and pass into and out of her vision, […]; one year she made the white gown for the girl whom she used to visit; four years later, dresses for her daughter. She sat beside the window for twelve years" (US, 374). Like Hightower and Minnie Cooper ["Dry September"], Zilphia is another death-in-life character. She observes an ever-changing society of which she herself will never be a part. As Morell remarks: "Condemned by her mother to remain a prisoner of the interior world, she has no opportunity to assert her identity in the realm of actuality" (1975, p.305).

This sense of loneliness and isolation evoked by the image of a character framed by a window is also perceptible in "A Rose for Emily". As Freywald notes: "Türen und Fenster, die üblicherweise eine Öffnung nach außen aber auch nach innen bilden, [...], können als Rahmen für eine Figur wie in einem Bild eine

Begrenzung gegen die Umgebung bilden, wie es zum Beispiel in 'A Rose for Emily' der Fall ist, [...]" (1983, p.62). Since Miss Emily is an 'aristocratic' woman, she remains aloof from the common villagers who admire her and place her on a pedestal. Being framed in a window, Miss Emily can be seen but at the same time she remains remote from her society. When the villagers sprinkle lime around the Grierson house to stop that awful stench emanating from it, Miss Emily silently watches the men from an upstairs window: "As they recrossed the lawn, a window that had been dark was lighted and Miss Emily sat in it, the light behind her, and her quiet upright torso motionless as that of an idol" (CS, p.123).

As motionless and static as the dead body of Homer Barron kept in an adjacent room, the murderess Miss Emily appears in the window like an idol – as an image to be admired. Interestingly, Faulkner uses this metaphor twice: "Now and then we would see her in one of the downstairs windows […] like the carven torso of an idol in a niche, looking or not looking at us, we could never tell which" (CS, p.128). Miss Emily does not need the window to look out – she needs it in order to be seen by the people outside. Her appearance at the window is thus a powerful metaphor for the continued existence of the last representative of those "august names" who belonged to the vanished era of the Old South (CS, p.119).

By contrast, Aunt Jenny in "There was a Queen" needs to look through her window in order to feel home again. Residing in the upper regions of the Sartoris house, Aunt Jenny is a ninety-year-old woman living in a wheelchair, who is recurrently presented looking through a window: "Beside the window (the sash was raised now, with its narrow border of colored Carolina glass which in the winter framed her head and bust like a hung portrait) an old woman sat in a wheel chair. […] She was looking out the window; in profile her face was high-arched, motionless" (CS, p.730). Here, Faulkner uses colored windowpanes to frame this female character. These colored windowpanes are a memento of Aunt Jenny's past. They are all that Aunt Jenny could save when the Union army set fire to her house in Carolina during the Civil War. As Elnora, Aunt Jenny's cook, servant and kin, remarks: "Getting here in the dead of winter without nothing […] but […] them colored window panes old Marse John put in the library window so She could look through it like it was Callina" (CS, pp.732. 733).

When Aunt Jenny is looking though these colored panes, she does not get a clear picture of the world outside but an illusionary image of her old home. In addition, this library window is a protective area to which Aunt Jenny retreats whenever she has had a significant encounter with a character. As Freywald notes:

> Das Fenster bildet nicht nur die Grenzzone, [...], es ist vielmehr ein Schutzbereich, in den Aunt Jenny sich zurückzieht. Das Symbol dieser schützenden Zone sind die farbigen Glasscheiben, die Aunt Jenny auf ihrer Flucht aus Carolina mitgebracht hatte, [...]. In die Nähe dieser Scheiben zieht sich Aunt Jenny in oder nach entscheidenden Begegnungen zurück: hier empfängt sie Narcissa zu der letzten Aussprache ('The sparse colored panes which framed the window dreamed, rich and hushed') (CS, p.738), hierhin flüchtet sie geradezu nach der Begegnung mit dem 'Yankee' ('She sat beside her dark window until the stranger was gone') (CS, p.737), und sie weigert sich nach Narcissas Eröffnung, diesen Platz zu verlassen ('They obeyed, leaving her sitting there: a slender, erect figure indicated only by the single gleam of her hair, in the wheel chair beside the window framed by the sparse and defunctive Carolina glass') (CS, p.742), an dem Elnora sie schließlich findet ('[…] where beside the dead window the old woman sat motionless, indicated only by that faint single gleam of white hair, as though for ninety years life had died slowly up her spare, erect frame, to linger for a twilit instant about her head before going out, though life itself had ceased') (CS, p.744) (1983, p.70).

Freywalds's observation is correct for Faulkner explicitly links Aunt Jenny's psychological collapse and subsequent death with the use of window imagery. When Narcissa reveals what she had done, the colored Carolina glass is referred to be "sparse and defunctive" and therefore indicative of her approaching death. After Aunt Jenny's death, then, she is found sitting beside her "dead window". The library window has also undergone a metaphorical death because without Aunt Jenny, there is no one else left in the house who needs to look through it.

Of further significance in the context of window imagery in this story is the garden set below the library window. On the day the story takes place, Aunt Jenny and Elnora stand beside the window and they watch Narcissa and her son Bory approach the big house through the garden:

> The sun was now falling level across the garden below the window, and soon the jasmine in the garden began to smell with evening, coming into the room in slow waves almost palpable; thick, sweet,

> oversweet. The two women were motionless in the window: the one leaning a little forward in the wheel chair, the Negress a little behind the chair, motionless too and erect as a caryatid (CS, p.731).

Here, Faulkner offers another example of contrasting images of motion and stasis. Whereas the garden with jasmine shrubs [planted by Aunt Jenny herself] through which Narcissa and Bory [representatives of the new generation] walk is an image of life and constant rebirth, Aunt Jenny and Elnora [the last Sartorises and representatives of the old order] are rendered like motionless statues. They have to be statuesque because they are representative of an era that will cease to exist. As Towner and Carothers explain, "a caryatide is a sculpture of a woman that acts as a supporting column in a building" (2006. p.388). This choice of words is accurate for Elnora is indeed acting like a supporting column in the Sartoris household – she is the last character who tries to keep up the finest qualities of the Sartoris.

Moreover, Faulkner refers to Aunt Jenny being looking through the window or sitting beside it for ten times throughout the whole text. This makes clear that Faulkner uses window imagery as a leitmotif in "There was a Queen". Furthermore, this short story was once, in an earlier phase of composition, aptly entitled "Through the Window" (Polk 1998, p.76). In addition, the short story's portrayal of Aunt Jenny is in concord with Faulkner's rendering of her in *Sanctuary*. In this novel, she is also recurrently watching through a window: "Through the same window he [Horace Benbow] and Miss Jenny had watched the same two people [Narcissa and Bory] walking in the same garden, where at that time the late, bright, dusty-odored flowers of October bloomed", and "Through the window Benbow and Miss Jenny watched the two people, […]" (SAN, pp. 24, 26).

In "That will be Fine", Faulkner also links the death of a character with window imagery. Uncle Rodney, who preferred to enter and leave a house rather through a window than through the front door, is by story's end carried away while lying dead on a window shutter: "And I could see then that what the men were carrying was a window blind with something wrapped in a quilt on it" (CS, p.285). The child narrator cannot understand yet that this thing is his dead uncle.

In some stories, Faulkner links window imagery with the eyes of his main characters and utilizes their ability [or inability] to see to tell his stories. Faulkner

establishes the relationship between windows and eyes in his short stories for the first time in "Pennsylvania Station" [1928]. In his account of the serried shops set in the Pennsylvania Station arcade, the narrator says: "[…] the bright and serried shop-windows had a fixed and insomniac glare like the eyes of people drugged with coffee, sitting up with a strange corpse" (CS, p.609). This personification makes the shop windows appear like human eyes watching the people go by. Anyway, window imagery in "Pennsylvania Station" is a mere decorative element and not in any way related to the main characters of the story. In "Red Leaves", by contrast, Faulkner explicitly links window imagery with human eyes: "the gutted windows [of the decaying steamboat are] like cataracted eyes" (CS, p.324). This reference to blind eyes clearly alludes to Moketubbe's closed eyes, which are as tightly closed as the blind windows of the decaying steamboat. On a metaphorical plane, Moketubbe's closed eyes indicate that he has lost his vision. He is thus a blind leader of an Indian tribe that is doomed to vanish from the face of the earth.

In "Uncle Willy", Faulkner also shows a keen awareness of the effect of window imagery and parallels his main character's eyes with the windows of his drugstore. Since Willy is a drug addict, he has never washed his drugstore windows. Thus, he has created a protective area where he cannot be seen from the outside when he takes his morphine injections: "We [some children of the village] liked to go to his store because it was always cool and dim and quiet inside because he never washed the windows; he said the reason was that he never had to bother to dress them because nobody could see in anyway, and so the heat couldn't get in either" (CS, p.226). Even though Willy is worried that people walking by may see him taking drugs, he nevertheless takes his injections in the presence of children [see also chapter 6.2.1]. When Willy has taken his morphine injection, however, his "eyes behind his glasses kind of all run together like broken eggs" (CS, p.227). When drugged, Willy has lost a clear perception of the real world surrounding him. Metaphorically, he is as blind as his defunctive windows.

After he was sent away in order to quit dope, Willy returns to Jefferson and must realize that his new store clerk has cleaned the protective dirty windows: "I remember that first afternoon when he came to town and we walked into the store and Uncle Willy looked at the clean windows that you could see through now

[…], with those eyes that were not dead at all" (CS, p.234). Now, for the first time, Willy's eyes are rendered as being alive. Freywald analyzes the relationship between Willy's lively eyes and the cleaned store windows. For this critic, the cleaned windows are expressive of Willy's changed perception of the world surrounding him (1983, p.54). Bereft of the protective barrier as established by the dirty windows, Willy has to come up with new ideas to set him in opposition to the Jefferson society. Freywald, however, fails to note that by story's end, when Willy has bought a plane in order to get away from Jefferson, his eyes are "bright behind his glasses" (CS, p.240), and, shortly before his fatal flight, his eyes are really "shining" (CS, p.244). The closer Willy approaches his death, the clearer and livelier his eyes become. The vantage point for Willy's new perception of things is the store clerk's act of cleaning the protective dirty windowpanes.

In *Absalom, Absalom!*, Faulkner uses window symbolism for different purposes. Again, Faulkner presents in this novel a character who escapes through a window [Rosa Coldfield's spinster aunt "climbed out the window and vanished" (AA, p.50)]. This incident is not relevant in this discussion because Rosa's aunt is merely a minor character. Of great significance in this book, however, are the closed windows of Miss Rosa's office that mirror her isolation from the modern world. When visiting her, Rosa Coldfield leads Quentin into her dark room that…

> […] Miss Coldfield still called the office because her father had called it that – a dim hot airless room with the blinds all closed and fastened for forty-three summers because when she was a girl someone had believed that light and moving air carried heat and that dark was always cooler (as the sun shone fuller and fuller an that side of the house) became latticed with yellow slashes full of dust motes which Quentin thought of as being flecks of the dead old paint itself blown inward from the scaling blinds as wind might have blown them (AA, p.3).

This room is not only sealed to prevent the heat from coming in, this room is locked in order to keep the sense of the past. The office is an enclosure of the past from which Miss Rosa cannot escape. Miss Rosa's estrangement from the modern world is also expressed in Quentin's remark about her invitation, the "quaint, stiffy formal request which was actually a summons, out of another world almost" (AA, p.5). Yet in the same way as Hightower, Miss Emily, or Elly are trapped in

their dark houses, Miss Rosa lives in a prison-like office whose window shutters are closed to the outside world so “that she could not look out them if she would” (Polk 1998, p.89). The barred windows symbolize her inclination to remain blind to the world outside and mirror thus her refusal to see the past in a different light.

Whereas Miss Rosa needs to have the window blinds closed for the creation of a private sphere, her nemesis Thomas Sutpen, however, does not even have doors and windows at all for he had lived for three years in “masculine solitude” in a house “without any feminised softness of window pane or door or mattress” (AA, p.30). Sutpen has no need for them because he is solely interested in the sheer magnitude of his mansion as an image of himself and his success – and not in the creation of personal space. Without windows and doors, as Ruzicka points out, Sutpen’s house will not have an “inside/outside relationship” because without these things, “human relationships inside the building” cannot exist (1987, p.50). His mansion is therefore only partly habitable and clearly no place for a woman. Yet when he discovers that a woman is essential for carrying out his design, Sutpen’s order to install windows and doors is thus not meant to make his house more comfortable for him – he needs these things to make his house (and thus his own person) more attractive for a woman. Faulkner again makes use of the window motif at the end of the novel when Miss Rosa and Quentin witness the burning of Sutpen’s mansion:

> […] [They were] glaring at the doomed house: and then for a moment maybe Clytie appeared in that window from which she must have been watching the gates constantly day and night for three months – the tragic gnome’s face beneath the clean headrag, against a red background of fire, seen for a moment between two swirls of smoke, looking down at them, […] (AA, p.300).

Quentin’s remark that Clytie had maybe appeared in that window emphasizes the dreamlike quality of his experience. He is not sure whether he actually saw her or not, as if it was just a trick of his troubled recollections. It goes without saying that Faulkner borrowed this use of window imagery from the Gothic tradition. On the final pages of the novel, Quentin is watching, bewildered, out of the window of his room in Harvard while reflecting the whole Sutpen story once again:

> Quentin did not answer, staring at the window; then he could not tell if it was the actual window or the window's pale rectangle upon his eyelids, though after a moment it began to emerge. It began to take shape in its same curious, light, gravity-defying attitude – the once-folded sheet of the wistaria Mississippi summer, the cigar smell, the random blowing of the fireflies (AA, p.301).

Quentin's confusion of reality and things imagined that obsesses his mind so predominantly in *The Sound and the Fury* is very well echoed in this passage. Moreover, the window Quentin is looking out is the same one with which Faulkner opens the second section of *The Sound and the Fury*, where Quentin starts his final day observing how "the shadow of the sash appeared on the curtains" (SF, p.48). For Quentin, as for many other characters, windows are boundaries that indicate separation from society. Instead of looking through the window, Quentin sees his own reflection and thinks about himself and his relationship to his world.

In *Sanctuary*, Faulkner again employs the image of a character watching absent-mindedly out of a window. In the same way as Quentin and Hightower cherish the comfort and security provided by closed windows, Temple Drake also needs to keep her window shut but, in addition to that, she also covers the window with shades. All the time she is being kept at Miss Reba's brothel, Temple is repeatedly depicted being looking out of her window in order to forget where she is and what Popeye had done to her: "After a while she moved the chair to the window and lifted the shade a little so she could see the street beneath", and "she stood for a moment at the window, the shade lifted aside, then she dropped it and turned into the room again, […]" (SAN, pp.227, 229). Still refusing to come to terms with the reality of her present situation, Temple creates herself a dark womb- or tomblike space in which she believes to be safe and alone. Similarly to Miss Rosa's dark and "dim coffin-smelling" office and Howard Boyd's cave in "The Brooch", Temple's dark and locked room is a sanctuary – a space that helps her to forget all the bad things that had happened to her. As Polk asserts:

> A good deal of *Sanctuary* takes place in darkness, in halls dimly lighted or completely dark, in houses hiding dark secrets and shameful acts shamefully spied upon, in corridors formed by tress and hedges; faces appear and disappear in front of windows and frames, blur in and out of focus […] (1998, p.44).

Yet Temple is not the only character in this novel who needs to keep his or her windows shut and covered. Horace Benbow, for instance, had boarded up the windows of his parent's house ten years ago when he left the town. After his return to Jefferson [and living in a different house with his wife], he removes the boards that cover these windows because he wants to dwell again in the house where he has spent his boyhood. For Horace, this house has become an emblem of his "state of childish innocence" that he desperately tries to keep up when he is confronted with Temple's case and the evil connected with it (Volpe 2001, p.142). Interestingly, Horace himself has nailed up the windows although he is barely able to do carpentry work, "revealing at the time no more skill with a mop than he had expected, than he had with the lost hammer with which he nailed the windows down and the shutters to ten years ago, […]" (SAN, p.120).

Another variation of the window motif that shows the contrast between inner spaces and outer world is to be found in Faulkner's frequent rendering of a character standing behind the barred window of the Jefferson jail. Here, the image of the barred window is used to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty. This variation of the window motif occurs in the novels *Sanctuary, If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem* [*The Wild Palms*], *Requiem for a Nun, The Hamlet* and *The Mansion*. However, Faulkner employs this image for the first time in *Sanctuary*:

> […] On the day when the sheriff brought Goodwin to town, there was a negro murderer in the jail, who had killed his wife; […]. He would lean in the window in the evening and sing. After supper, a few negroes gathered along the fence below – […] – and in chorus with the murderer, they sang spirituals while white people slowed and stopped in the leafed darkness […]; […] "Fo days mo! Den dey ghy stroy de bes ba'ytone singer in nawth Mississipi!" (pp.114,115).
>
> Nightily the negro murderer leaned there, his face checkered by the shadow of the grating in the restless interstices of leaves, singing in chorus with those along the fence below (pp. 126, 127).

The Negro murderer, who waits in a neighboring cell for his imminent execution, foreshadows Goodwin's own fate because Goodwin is charged with homicide: "The Negro murderer was to be hung on a Saturday without pomp, buried without circumstance: one night he would be singing at the barred window and yelling down out of the soft myriad darkness of a May night, the next night he would be

gone, leaving the window for Goodwin" (SAN, p.131). Yet Goodwin is denied a fair trial and, instead, he is going to be lynched by a mob in the streets. Goodwin's violent murder is told from the perspective of Benbow who returns to the jail and does not see Lee behind the barred window of his prison cell any more – a void indicative that something terrible must have happened to Lee Goodwin:

> Then he saw the people, a shifting mass filling the street, and the bleak, shallow yard above which the square and slotted bulk of the jail loomed. In the yard, beneath the barred window, a man in his shirt sleeves faced the crowd, hoarse, gesticulant. The barred window was empty. Horace went on toward the square. […] "It's a fire," Horace said. He could see the glare; against it the jail loomed in stark and savage silhouette. […] Horace ran. Ahead of him he saw other figures running, turning into the alley beside the jail; then he heard the sound, of the fire, the furious sound of gasoline. He turned into the alley. He could see the blaze, in the center of a vacant lot where on market days wagons were tethered. Against the flames black figures showed, antic; he could hear panting shouts; through a fleeting gap he saw a man turn and run, a mass of flames, still carrying a five-gallon coal oil can which exploded with a rocket-like glare while he carried it, running (SAN, pp.293, 295, 296).

Of course, Benbow is unable to prevent the people from lynching Lee Goodwin while he helplessly watches how the mob burns Goodwin alive in front of the jail.

In his sequel to *Sanctuary, Requiem for a Nun*, Faulkner illustrates the fate of Nancy Mannigoe. In this book, Faulkner emphasizes the special location of the jail, where mostly black people used to stand behind its barred windows:

> […] and in Jefferson, everything going to the graveyard passes the jail, or going anywhere else for that matter, passing right under the upstairs barred windows – the bullpen and the cells where the Negro prisoners – the crapshooters and whiskey-peddlers and vagrants and the murderers and murderesses too – can look down and enjoy it, enjoy the funerals, too (RFN p.169).

Nancy is just one among the many Negro prisoners in Faulkner who are sentenced to death [she has killed the child of Temple Drake]. This is the second appearance of Nancy in the Jefferson jail context. Nancy was arrested and kept there for having molested a white man – an incident that is remembered by Quentin Compson in the short story "That Evening Sun" [see also chapter 6.2.2].

In the Snopes trilogy, Faulkner repeatedly shows Mink Snopes standing behind barred windows of a prison cell. In *The Hamlet*, Faulkner renders Mink's stay in the Jefferson jail where he waits in vain for Flem Snopes to get him out:

> There was a small, high, barred window in the wall [of Mink's cell], but there was nothing beyond the window save twilight. [...] Ratliff, passing to and fro between his home and the Square, would see the two small grimed hands, immobile and clasping loosely the bars of the jail window at a height not a great deal above that at which a child would have held them (HAM, pp.285, 287).

In this excerpt, Faulkner offers a brilliant characterization of Mink. The small hands grasping the bars of the window at a height "at which a child would have held them" are not only symbolic of his frustration and growing awareness that Flem might never come to his aid; this description also reveals that Mink is still a child or childlike character – despite the fact that he has killed another man. In effect, this description of Mink creates sympathy in the reader for "this small, pitiful dirt-farmer abandoned by his kinsman Flem" (Snyder 1989, p.27). In *The Mansion*, Faulkner again employs this image of Mink when he shows him in his prison cell, "sitting with his face glued to the window like a child" (MAN, p.721):

> And during all the long weeks while he waited in jail for his trial, he would stand at the little window of his cell, his grimed hands gripped among the bars and his face craned and pressed against them, to watch a slice of street before the jail and the slice of the Square which his cousin would have to cross to come to the jail and abolish the dream, fee him, get him out (MAN, p.714).

After Mink was allowed to leave the jail thirty-eight years later, he returns to Jefferson in order to take revenge against that man whose face he has been seeing during all those years when he has stared absent-mindedly out of his window: Flem Snopes [see chapter 6.1.2].

Although *If I Forget Thee, Jerusalem* is not concerned with Yoknapatawpha County and thus not with the Jefferson jail, Faulkner nevertheless continues to use the barred window motif. In the first subnarrative of this novel, entitled "The Wild Palms", Faulkner shows Harry Wilbourne staring out of the window of his prison cell from where he can see the palms splashing into the water outside:

> But the palm was there. It was just outside his window, bigger, more shabby; when he and the officer passed beneath it to enter, with no wind to cause it it had set up a sudden frenzied clashing as though they had startled it, and twice more during the night while he stood, shifting his hands from time to time as that portion of the bars which they clasped grew warm and began to sweat on his palms, it clashed again in that brief sudden inexplicable flurry. […], the long glare of brazen afternoons while the salt-impinged sun slanted full and fierce into his window, printing his face and upper body with the bars to which he held […] (WP, pp.258, 263).

Harry is sentenced to jail for fifty years because he botched an attempt at an abortion which led to the tragic death of his lover, Charlotte Rittenmeyer. At the end of the novel, Charlotte's husband Francis Rittenmeyer pays Harry a brief visit in the prison cell whereby he provides him with a cyanide tablet to give Harry the chance to put an end to his life. But Harry refuses to take the cyanide and destroys it because "between grief and nothing [he] will take the grief" (WP p.273):

> And now he was about to get it, think it into words, so it was all right now and he turned to the window and, holding the open box carefully beneath and pinching the [cyanide] tablet in a folded cigarette paper between thumb and finger he rubbed the tablet carefully into powder on one of the lower bars, catching the last dust in the box and wiping the bar with the cigarette paper, and emptied the box onto the floor and with his shoe-sole ground it into the dust and old spittle and caked creosote until it had completely vanished and burned the cigarette paper and returned to the window (WP, p.272).

It is striking that Harry uses the window bars to crumble the cyanide tablet, which represents his only chance to avoid being imprisoned for five decades. Framed in his window, Harry has become an icon of frustration and impotence. Nonetheless, he does not evade punishment and accepts the comfort and security of being kept behind the window bars. He regards his prison cell as a place where he has to cope with the loss of his beloved woman. Without Charlotte, he does not need to be outside the jail any more. And being sentenced to jail for half a century, Harry has all the time in the world to come to terms with the loss of his beloved woman.

To summarize this chapter briefly, windows are boundaries between public and private spaces. In Faulkner's writings, window imagery is instrumental in rendering a character's loneliness, separation, exclusion, isolation or alienation.

Moreover, windows are a point of exit when protective or over-possessive parents forbid their children to leave the house and block all doors. In this regard, windows can be seen as 'second-class doors'. Yet windows are also used as a frame that captures a character in a moment of crisis or reverie. Most important of all, windows always refer to visual qualities. They permit some trapped characters to see the world surrounding them without being part of it. Although windows allow seeing the outside world, some characters standing in a window do not look outside their windows at all. Instead, they rather want to be an object to be seen than to be a seeing subject. Some characters use windows as protective barriers to be excluded and thus shielded from the modern world surrounding them. Among those who exclude themselves from 20$^{th}$ century Jefferson society belong Hightower, Willy Christian, Miss Rosa, Aunt Jenny, and – after her father's death – Miss Emily. It is important to note that three out of five characters are females who once belonged to Jefferson's upper class and who are thus representatives of the order of the Old South. Since Miss Emily, Miss Rosa, and Aunt Jenny cannot cope with the changed realities of the New South, they prefer to live remote from the community and either shut their blinds to express their alienation from the modern world [Miss Rosa], look through colored glass panes to be reminded of a past long since gone [Aunt Jenny], or do not look out of a window at all [Miss Emily]. Hightower uses his study window as a window into the past where he sees his grandfather time and again commanding a troop of rebel soldiers rushing through the streets to fight against the Union army while Uncle Willy, by contrast, keeps his window panes so dirty that nobody can look into his store when he takes morphine.

It strikes that Faulkner mostly links female characters to window imagery to express a vanishing generation's dissatisfaction with modern Jefferson. Besides those characters who indeed want to be excluded from society, there are also some characters who are excluded from the Jefferson community by either parental or stately authority. This encompasses, on the one hand, the convicts Mink, Harry, and Lee Goodwin who look through their barred jail windows to get some distraction, whereas other characters like Zilphia Gant, Joe Christmas, Caddy, and Miss Quentin, on the other hand, are not able to take part in the real world because

of overbearing parents. As a result, they leave their parental home through the open window and breach thereby the law of the father. Lower class characters like Lena Grove or the Grier boys also use their windows to leave their houses but there is no real need for them to do so.

In brief, window imagery is hardly connected with race since most cabins are not equipped with windows. It rather serves to delineate problems of [once] upper class characters and young females and males in revolt against parental authority. Weak male characters like Hightower or Quentin do not even try to escape through open windows. Instead, they keep them closed and use the reflecting windowpanes as mirrors for an introspective self-reflection [Quentin] or to delude oneself about former glory [Hightower].

Moreover, windows are also linked to mansions, cabins, attics, stores, and barbershops. Whereas cabins and attics usually lack windows, public houses like stores and barbershops, for instance, need windows to display the offered goods or services [see also chapter 6.2.1 and 6.2.4]. Likewise, Faulkner's mansions are equipped with windowpanes. This emphasizes the binary opposition mansion – cabin and thus wealth as opposed to poverty even more.

Unlike Poe's story "the Fall of the House of Usher", which seems to have influenced a good deal of Faulkner's writings, Faulkner's houses are never attributed with monitoring eyes that watch a character's every move. Instead, Faulkner developed Poe's motif of eye-like windows into a system indicative of social segregation – as seen in his frequent use of binary oppositions as being black or white or being male or female, for example.

### 6.3.4 Porches

Whereas windows and doors are interfaces within the structure of the house that principally connect the inside of a house with the outside world, porches and similar architectural constructions such as, for instance, galleries or porticoes, are spaces set completely outside of the house. Porches and the like are attachments to a house and therefore they add emphasis to the horizontal dimension of a house. Architecturally, one can classify a vast variety of different porch types. The most important types in the Yoknapatawpha context are the portico, gallery, and the veranda. It is important to note that porticoes are mostly attached to upper class dwellings while verandas and galleries belong to lower and middle class houses. Further information about different porch types are offered in Lounsbury's study *An Illustrated Glossary of Early Southern Architecture and Landscape* (1994).

On these outdoors spaces, mostly attached to the front or to the back of a house, porch-dwellers are usually exposed to the public eye. In addition to that, porches are not only shady spaces for sitting out of doors; they are also important places for social life and!interaction between the different sexes and races.

Since porches are set betwixt and between private and public spheres, they also serve as metaphors of liminality. On these transitional spaces, then, sharp distinctions and rules regarding different classes, sexes and races begin to blur. Hence, the image of the porch can be used to designate psychological conditions because they provide the locus "where individuals, during the ritual process, [can be] liberated from normative demands" (Turner 1974, p.13).

Although the porch is undeniable a vital part of Southern identity, the porch itself is not an American invention. Edwards' study of the porch shows that the American front porch has its origin most probably in African architecture:

> Before the coming of the Europeans, the indigenous domestic architectures of the tropical Coasts of the Gulf of Guinea, between Cape Mersurado and Old Calibar and as far south as Angola, were characterized by rectangular buildings. Some were constructed low to the ground, but many were raised on platforms or pillars, with open walls or gallery-like structures incorporated into them (1989, p.23).

Vlach asserts that free blacks from Haiti brought their architecture with them to the American South. He writes that the front porch "may be another manifestation of the common wisdom of black folk. Slaves might have added porches to their cabins as a matter of traditional architectural practice" (1978, p.138). Beckham asserts that English settlers and African slaves built the first American front porches in the seventeenth century, borrowing concepts from the Indian bungalow or the Haitian "shotgun" house (1988, p.72). Donlon states that the American porch also shows traces of European influences, as well: "We need only think of the imposing portico that graces Thomas Jefferson's Monticello to remember the influences of classical architecture on Southern plantation homes. Jefferson relied on the architecture of Rome mainly because he wanted to reject the influence of England on American architecture" (2001, p.62). Beckham's study illustrates the spreading of the porch in the American South in the middle of the 19$^{th}$ century:

> Until the mid-19$^{th}$ century, only in the South were dwellings – 'big houses' on the great plantations, slave cabins, and everything in between – routinely equipped with sitting porches, and since the decline of the bungalow, only in the South are new houses still equipped with front porches. The style of the porch and its supports has signaled the social status of those who use it. For example, two-story porches graced with Doric columns traditionally mean wealth and power, today imitations of such porches appear on banks, motels, and other establishments that wish to attract the would-be wealthy or powerful. Porches supported with incompletely trimmed posts, on the other hand, suggest working-class inhabitants (1989, p.515).

In literature, the image of the porch is used for a whole range of different purposes. Studying the porch motif in literature, Price states that in the works of some Southern writers such as Faulkner, Wolfe, Porter, or McCullers, a front porch is often used as a stage for "charged encounters of love or hate on the family's last refuge, its physical hearth and home" (1992, p.2). Moreover, Price considers the porch as a "vital transition" situated between the "uncontrollable out-of-doors and the cherished interior of the home" (1992, p.1). Similarly, Donlon calls the porch a "transitional space" located between "public and private spheres" where individuals can "negotiate an identity within a community of shared customs, largely through the stories they tell" (1996, p.95).

Beckham's study also shows that the sex barrier has weakened on the front porch. Due to the fact that it was inappropriate for young females to search for potential males in public locations, women needed a place where they could look out for potential suitors. Beckham asserts that the porch "became a sexual market place where the woman seemed to be on display but where she actually sampled wares presented before her" (1988, p.77). Although young females had to wait for possible suitors to come along in order to make the first move toward courtship, the women themselves were mostly in charge of the whole affair. It seemed as if the females depended on a man's first move but, actually, the young women themselves did often "initiate acceleration of a relationship" while maintaining the myth of the male initiator at the same time (Beckham 1988, p.76).

Just as sex barriers weakened on the front porch, interracial relationships also underwent a similar alteration and became less strict – due to the fact that porches offered a liminal space where blacks were able to maintain social relationships with whites and vice versa. Beckham asserts that porches both divide and connect different racial communities because members of the other race can often gain access to the porch where, between absolute private and absolute public, relationships that otherwise would be impossible can flourish there for however brief a time (1988, p.75). Donlon agrees with Beckham's statement. She also sees porches as places where two people of different races are able to learn from each other's culture through sharing family stories and community customs. Donlon's grandmother, for instance, experienced interracial relationships on her porch although these kinds of conversation were limited and liminal (1996, p.97).

The significance of porches ebbed with the invention and introduction of air conditioning in the 1960s. Yet at the same time, the porch also lost its important role in courtship rituals. In her study *From Front Porch to Back Seat,* Bailey shows how a new dating system removed couples from the watchful eyes of family and local community to private spheres where they were no longer monitored (1989, p.13). Today, there are still some Southerners unwilling to adjust to air-conditioning and who instead prefer to cling to the porch in order to pass family lore to children or grandchildren to keep old family traditions alive (Beckham 1989, p.515).

In Faulkner's body of work, the image of the porch mainly serves social, sexual, racial, and psychological purposes. In addition to that, Faulkner's writings frequently highlight the porch as an integral part of Southern identity for they are repeatedly the locus of storytelling, gossip, courtship, and class distinctions.

This is shown, for instance, in the way the citizens of Frenchmen's Bend take notice of each member of the Snopes clan. When Ab Snopes arrives in the hamlet and tells Jody that he wants to rent one of Varner's farms, some men lounging around on the gallery of Varner's store observe Ab meticulously:

> Standing on the gallery of the store, above the half dozen overalled men sitting or squatting about it with pocket knives and slivers of wood, Varner watched his caller limp stiffly across the porch, looking neither right nor left, and descend and from among the tethered teams and saddled animals below the gallery choose a gaunt saddleless mule in a worn plow bridle with rope reins and lead it to the step and mount awkwardly and stiffly and ride away, still without once looking to either side. "To hear that ere foot, you'd think he weighed two hundred pounds," one of them said. "Who's he, Jody?" […] "Name's Snopes," he said (HAM, p.10).

Unlike the talkative and inquisitive men out on the porch, Ab is reticent and completely ignorant of his environment – although he is at the center of the porch dwellers' attention. This indicates that Ab prefers to live a life on the margin of society. Yet for the porch dwellers themselves, there are hardly any alternatives for to anything other than to hang around on Varner's store porch in order to kill time. This impression is reinforced in Faulkner's description of this small village:

> Besides Varner's store and cotton gin and the combined grist mill and blacksmith shop […], and the schoolhouse and the church and the perhaps three dozens dwellings within sound of both bells, the village consisted of a livery barn and lot and a contiguous shady though grassless yard in which sat a sprawling rambling edifice partly of sawn boards and partly of logs, unpainted and of two storeys in places and known as Littlejohn's hotel, […] (HAM, p.31).

As this excerpt makes clear, this hamlet simply has nothing to offer that may keep its villagers entertained. Thus, it becomes apparent why some villagers [mostly the male ones] gather either at Miss Littlejohn's veranda or at Varner's store

porch for these places are the only spots that offer some kind of distraction. This becomes particularly clear in the passage that highlights the reaction of some villagers right after Flem's first appearance in Varner's store. Eager to learn more about this stranger, the villagers are lounging around on Miss Littlejohn's veranda opposite Varner's store. Usually they would have been there on any other day after supper, too, but this evening they are gathering there just to watch Flem "even before the sun was completely gone, looking now and then toward the dark front of Varner's store as people will gather to look quietly at the cold embers of a lynching or at the propped ladder and open window of an elopement, […]" (HAM, p.31). Occasionally exchanging just a few words, Ratliff and his fellows stare at the front of Varner's store and wait for something spectacular to happen that is somehow connected with Flem:

> For a moment nobody spoke. They sat or squatted along the veranda, invisible to one another. It was almost full dark, the departed sun a pale greenish stain in the northwestern sky. The whippoorwills had begun and fireflies winked and drifted among the trees beyond the road (HAM, p.32).

This excerpt does not only emphasize the significance of the porch as a place for social gathering – this text also highlights the novel's Southern setting and underscores thus that porch life is an integral part of Southern identity. Ratliff and his fellows sitting outside on the porch are surrounded by nature and they can hear, smell, and see the very things that surround them. Therefore, a porch is also a place that ties its dwellers to the world outside their houses and keeps them in touch with nature. Faulkner introduced the image of the porch as a place for being in harmony with nature for the first time in *Absalom, Absalom!*. In that novel, porch imagery serves to create a somewhat nostalgic picture of the Old South:

> It was a summer of wistaria. The twilight was full of it and of the smell of his father's cigar as they sat on the front gallery after supper until it would be time for Quentin to start, while in the deep shaggy lawn below the veranda the fireflies blew and drifted in soft random – the odor, the scent, which five months later Mr. Compson's letter would carry up from Mississippi and over the long iron New England snow and into Quentin's sitting room at Harvard (AA, p.23).

It is striking that both novels feature the image of a porch lit in twilight. On the one hand, twilight is just the time when the day is starting to become night but, on the other hand, twilight also refers to the condition of being in-between two different kinds of states or conditions. In this respect, both of these novels employ a twilight setting on a metaphorical plane. Faulkner thus creates a transitional period at a transitional location. In *The Hamlet*, the growing darkness surrounding the porch is a symbol for Flem whose actions will eventually change the situation of some citizens of the little village for the worse. In *Absalom, Absalom!*, on the other hand, the image of the porch lit in twilight is a symbolically charged setting for the Compsons to discuss a story about the dawn of the Old South. In addition to that, this twilight setting also emphasizes Quentin's mental instability for he is all the time oscillating between admiration and hatred of the Old South.

Unlike *Absalom, Absalom!, The Hamlet* is rather in the humorous vein. As a result, the novel's porch scenes are not charged with a deeper reflection on the nature of the Old South but, instead, these scenes are quite funny. As Ratliff, for instance, muses about the spotted horse episode, Faulkner places him again out on the veranda of Miss Littlejohn's boarding house, where he is talking to some friends about the riot caused by the spotted horses, "[…] it was the biggest drove of just one horse I ever seen. It was in my room and it was on the front porch and I could hear Mrs. Littlejohn hitting it over the head with that wash-board in the back yard all at the same time" (HAM, p.341). Ratliff exaggerates his account of this experience and stresses thus his qualities as a virtuous storyteller who wants to win the audience's sympathy. Besides, exaggeration is a key ingredient of Old South humor and therefore an integral part of storytelling. This same kind of humor is also prevalent in the chapter entitled "Eula", in which Faulkner describes the way young Eula Varner's beautiful appearance attracts the men and makes them gather on Miss Littlejohn's veranda, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

> […], [Eula is] passing the store where the usual quota of men would be squatting and sitting, past Mrs. Littlejohn's veranda where there would usually be an itinerant drummer or horse trader – and Varner now believing, convinced, that he knew why they were there too, the real reason why they had driven twenty miles from Jefferson […] (HAM, pp.111, 112).

Of course, it is Eula's beauty and femininity that makes the men wait for her to see her walk along the street – and there is little that Jody can do to keep possible suitors away from her. Quite the contrary, as Eula grows older, Will Varner's porch becomes a place for courtship where the adolescents of the hamlet and its vicinity desperately try to attract Eula – as it had been custom in the Old South:

> After church […] the traced galled mules would doze along the Varner fence while their riders sat on the veranda, doggedly and vainly sitting each other out, crass and loud and baffled and raging not at one another but at the girl herself who apparently did not care whether they stayed or not, apparently not even aware that the sitting-out was going on. […] They would sit leashed and savage and loud and wild at the vain galloping seconds while the shadows lengthened and the frogs and whippoorwills began and the fireflies began to blow and to drift above the creek (HAM, pp.145, 146).

As this text shows, these adolescents are as attracted to Eula sitting on the porch as moths are attracted to light. Yet, in the end, it is McCarron to whom she feels attracted and who is able to drive away all other suitors after a fierce fight. When Eula and McCarron return home, Will Varner can hear them "come up from the gate and onto the veranda, talking quietly, murmuring as she and her young men did about what her father believed was nothing" (HAM, pp.153, 154). Varner, however, does not notice that his daughter quickly runs into her room in order to change her dress. If he had, he might have realized that his daughter had had sexual intercourse with McCarron. As soon as Varner learns that Eula is pregnant, he needs a 'decent' husband for his daughter in order to keep the Varner family's respectability intact. As a result, Varner instructs Eula to marry Flem Snopes:

> She saw him almost every day, because in her fifteenth summer he began to come to the house itself, usually after supper, to sit with her father on the veranda, not talking but listening, spitting his tobacco neatly over the railing. Sometimes on Sunday afternoons he would come and squat against a tree […]; she would see him there from where she sat on the veranda surrounded by her ravening crowd of that year's Sunday beaux. […] In the next summer, her sixteenth, she not only did not look at him, she never saw him again because he now lived in the same house, eating at the same table, using her brother's saddle horse to attend to his and her father's interminable business (HAM, pp.162, 163)

Once, this very veranda had been a place of socialization and entertainment where Eula was set right in the center of the young men's attention but then Eula's situation has changed for the worse. Being married to Flem Snopes, Eula begins to understand that she does not need a porch any longer because her days of being courted by the finest men of the village are gone.

The image of the porch as a place for courtship is also a recurrent motif in the short stories "Elly" [1929] and "A Courtship" [1942]. "Elly", to begin with, is Faulkner's first short story that uses porches on a metaphorical plane. The title character is said to have spent almost every night in the company of a different man in the shadow of the screened veranda of her parent's house:

> She [Elly] was eighteen. She lived in Jefferson, two hundred miles away, with her father and mother and grandmother, in a biggish house. It had a deep veranda with screening vines and no light. In this shadow she half lay almost nightly with a different man – youths and young men of the town first, but later with almost anyone, any transient in the small town whom she met by either convention or by chance, provided his appearance was decent (CS, p.208).

In the early 20th century, it was socially unacceptable to invite young men into the bedroom of an unmarried woman. This is why Elly uses her veranda [a socially accepted place for courtship] as a hiding place where neither the public eye nor her parents can observe her. Yet despite her interest in the male sex, Elly has still retained her virginity. As Towner and Carothers point out, 'half lay' is a "euphemism for being engaged in sexual activity other than intercourse, including just kissing" (2006, p.106). It appears to be a fact known among the opposite sex that Elly still refrains from having sexual intercourse for "she would never ride in their cars with them at night" (CS, p.208). In this respect, Elly's veranda is used as an architectural metaphor signifying Elly's unwillingness to have sexual intercourse with the men she has selected so far [for whatever reasons].

As soon as Elly becomes acquainted with Paul de Montigny, who is suspected of having Negro blood, she changes her mind quickly. In this character, Elly believes she has found a tool to take revenge against her hated grandmother. This becomes clear as Elly introduces Paul to her grandmother [representative of the old order], who makes the old woman shrink back in terror and disgust:

> The next afternoon Paul walked up onto the veranda. Elly was sitting in the swing, her grandmother in a chair nearby. […] "This is Mr. de Montigny, Grandmother!" […]. "Mr. de Montigny! From Louisiana!" she screamed, and saw the grandmother, without moving below the hips, start violently backward as a snake does to strike. That was in the afternoon. That night Elly quitted the veranda for the first time. She and Paul were in a close clump of shrubbery on the lawn; (CS, pp.210, 211).

This incident makes Elly aware that to have sex with a man suspected of being a Negro might be an ultimate act of rebellion against her grandmother and all that the old woman represents. As a consequence, Elly quits the veranda for the first time and decides to go with Paul into the bushes. Yet they are not able to have sex because the grandmother suddenly catches them in the act. As Volpe points out,

> Her [Elly's] fascination with Paul de Montigny, her wild desire to give herself to him, is not sexual. The idea of sex with a 'Crillo' is irresistible because it violates the two greatest taboos of her society: an unchaste bride and sex between a black male and a white woman. Elly shares these taboos, and Paul becomes a symbol of ultimate, irrevocable defiance (2004, p.91).

In this short story, Faulkner's choice of space is symbolic of his protagonist's state of mind. Elly's veranda is a liminal space where she finds the liberty to do whatever she wants to do – as opposed to the inside of her house, which is a symbol of the rule of her father. As long as she wants to remain a virgin, Elly meets male visitors on her veranda, but when she wants to take revenge and thus gives herself to Paul, she goes behind some bushes or into the woods (CS, pp.207, 211). In addition to that, the veranda is not only a symbol of Elly's virginity; it is at the same time also a metaphor to render her loneliness and role as an outsider in the Jefferson society. Once again, Faulkner makes architectural structures become architectural metaphors that explain his characters' behavior and intentions.

In "A Courtship", however, Faulkner renders a rivalry between two men who fight in order to determine which of them shall marry the beautiful woman they compete for. While the rivals Ikkemotubbe and David Hogganbeck are engaged in various contests [including eating, drinking, riding, and racing] to win the woman they love as a prize for the victorious, the woman [always referred to

as Herman Basket's sister] makes her own choice and marries Log-in-the-Creek, a very lazy Indian who always lounges around on her gallery playing his harmonica. "A Courtship" is primarily a story about male ignorance and Faulkner pokes fun at traditional male behavior. The text below shows how Ikkemotubbe makes a fool of himself when he is wooing for the woman he desires. Porch imagery, of course, is instrumental in conveying this incident:

> They [some Native Americans] would hold the other horse for him [Ikkemotubbe] as, stripped to the waist, his hair and body oiled with bear's grease as when racing (though with honey mixed into the bear's grease now) and with only a rope hackamore and no saddle as when racing, Ikkemotubbe would ride on his new racing pony past the gallery where Herman Basket's sister sat shelling corn or peas into the silver wine pitcher […], while Log-in-the-Creek […] leaned against one of the gallery posts and blew into his harmonica. Then one of the young men held the racing pony, and on his gaited mare now and wearing his flower-painted weskit and pigeon-tailed coat and beaver hat in which he looked handsomer than a steamboat gambler and richer even than the whisky-trader, Ikkemotubbe would ride past the gallery where Herman Basket's sister shelled another pod of peas into the pitcher and Log-in-the-Creek sat with his back against the post and blew into the harmonica. Then another of the young men would take the mare too and Ikkemotubbe would walk to Herman Basket's and sit on the gallery too in his fine clothes while Herman Basket's sister shelled another pod of peas perhaps into the silver pitcher and Log-in-the-Creek lay on his back on the floor, blowing into the harmonica (CS, pp. 363, 364).

Throughout this passage, Faulkner contrasts images of motion [Ikkemotubbe's desperate attempts to win the woman's attention] with images of stasis [Log-in-the-Creek's steady passivity]. The more passive Ikkemotubbe gets [racing – ride – sat] and the closer he approaches the gallery, the lower Log-in-the-Creek gets down to the floor of the gallery [leaned against the post – sat with his back against the post – lay on his back on the floor]. This progression or shift from the vertical to the horizontal dimension is symbolic of Herman Basket's sister's choice of husband. She does not want to have a lively and active husband but, instead, somebody who is calm and down to earth: Log-in-the-Creek. In addition to that, the young woman herself is at least as lazy as her future husband because "she did not walk at all unless she had to" (CS, p.362):

> One of the earliest sounds in the Plantation would be the voice of […] [her] aunt crying to know why she had not risen and gone to the spring for water with the other girls, which she did not do sometimes until Herman Basket himself rose and made her, or in the afternoon crying to know why she did not go to the river with the other girls and women to wash, which she did not do very often either (CS, p.362).

It is also striking that Herman Basket's sister and Log-in-the-Creek are always referred to as being lazy on the gallery [image of stasis], while Ikkemotubbe and David Hogganbeck perform their race [image of motion]. In the light of this, the gallery is both the focal point and frame for all the action within this story.

In "Golden Land" [1935], Faulkner's rendering of the intrigues of a wealthy but morally corrupted real estate agent in L.A., a terrace serves as the locus to convey Ira Ewing's estrangement from his family,

> The delicate iron balustrade and the marble steps coiled down to the tilefloored and barnlike living room beyond which he could hear his wife and his son talking on the breakfast terrace. […] He emerged onto the terrace; the voices ceased. The sun, strained by the vague high soft almost nebulous California haze, fell upon the terrace with a kind of treacherous unbrightness. The terrace, the sun-drenched terra cotta tiles, butted into a rough and savage shear of canyonwall bare yet without dust, on or against which a solid mat of flowers bloomed in fierce lush myriad-colored paradox as though in place of being rooted into and drawing from the soil they lived upon air alone and had been merely leaned intact against the sustenanceless lavawall by someone who would later return and take them away (CS, p.705, 706, 707).

Usually, this terrace is the place where the Ewing family meets for breakfast but now, Ira's and his family's covert mutual dislike of one another turns into overt hostility and makes the terrace a place charged with hatred. In fact, Ira himself is responsible for his family's rejection because he uses a scandal in which his own daughter is involved in as a means to call attention to his real estate business. His wife's hatred and loathing of him becomes clear in the following text:

> "How do I know?" she said. "Or are you [Ira] the same model son you have been a husband and seem to be a father?" Her voice was not shrill yet, nor even very loud, and none could have told how fast her breathing was because she sat so still, rigid beneath the impeccable and unbelievable hair, looking at him with that pale and outraged un-

> forgiveness. They both looked at each other across the luxurious table – the two people who at one time twenty years ago would have turned as immediately and naturally and unthinkingly to one another in trouble, who even ten years ago might have done so (CS, p.708)

Ira's sun-drenched terrace is just another "Golden Land" – a place of never ending summer, which seems to be as unreal as the images presented in the nearby Hollywood studios. It is thus an image as insincere and two-faced as Ira Ewing himself. However, the terrace scene reaches its climax when Voyd, Ira's son, insults his father and provokes him thus to resort to harsh reactions:

> "Now, now," Voyd said. "Don't interfere with the girl's [Ira's daughter] career. After all these years, when at last she seems to have found a part that she can [to participate in a sex orgy] –" He ceased; his father had turned and was looking at him. Voyd lay in his chair, looking at his father with that veiled insolence that was almost feminine. Suddenly it became completely feminine; with a muffled halfscream he swung his legs out to spring up and flee but it was too late; Ira stood above him, gripping him not by the throat but by the face with one hand, so that Voyd's mouth puckered and slobbered in his father's hard, shaking hand. Then the mother sprang forward and tried to break Ira's grip but he flung her away and then caught and held her, struggling too, with the other hand when she sprang in again.
> […] But Voyd could say nothing because of his father's hand gripping his jaws open, or more than likely because of terror. His body was free of the chair now, writhing and thrashing while he made his slobbering, moaning sound of terror while his father held him with one hand and held his screaming mother with the other one. Then Ira flung Voyd free, onto the terrace; Voyd rolled once and came onto his feet, crouching, retreating toward the French windows with one arm flung up before his face while he cursed his father. Then he was gone. […] Then she [his wife] was gone too (CS pp. 709, 710).

Deserted by his own family, Ira has to face the consequences of his machinations alone by himself. Here, the vacant terrace is also a symbolic representation of the emptiness in Ira's life [which finds a parallel in his son's name Voyd (void)]. Like his son, Ira is lacking any moral principles and ethical standards. As it turns out, this rich man, who knows to be seen in the right light, is in fact a shallow and misanthropic husband who does not even shrink from brutalizing his own family.

In "Elly", Faulkner uses the image of the porch as a symbolically charged structure for the first time. In that story, the porch becomes a symbol of Elly's

yearning for independence and sexuality. In “Golden Land”, Ira’s sunny terrace serves as the locus for a family conflict, and in “A Courtship”, a gallery is used as a focal point to highlight images of stasis in a story of movement.

In his novels, Faulkner shows similar uses of the porch motif. Moreover, his novels often employ the image of the porch as a place for social gathering and storytelling – a variation of the porch motif that does not occur in the short stories.

In *The Hamlet*, for instance, Faulkner uses porches predominantly as places for gossip, storytelling, and communication. Of particular interest in this issue is the character Ratliff who tries to oppose all of Flem’s wheeling and dealings. In this novel, porches turn into places where good storytellers as Ratliff “seize and display power in the face of an already imposed social order” (Donlon 1996, p.95). Ratliff’s speculations about Flem Snopes become the common knowledge of the whole hamlet because porches are mouthpieces of the small community. In addition, Ratliff’s opinion sets the principles of what is right or wrong; he defines correct behavior and is thus able to judge all of Flem’s ill actions. This is necessary to make Ratliff become the upright antagonist who is the only one able to oppose Flem’s machinations. It is worthy to note that Varner’s gallery and Miss Littlejohn’s veranda are important public spaces for Ratliff to work against Flem.

In *Absalom, Absalom*!, Faulkner uses porch imagery to render differences in class and race. Yet *Absalom, Absalom!* is also a novel about storytelling and a great deal of storytelling takes place on the “rotting portico” (SF, p185) [in *Absalom, Absalom!,* this place is referred to as the front gallery] of the Compson house where Quentin is listening to his father’s narration of the Sutpen tragedy.

Donlon writes that the decaying portico of the Compson house is “symbolic of the decaying plantation culture” where “Quentin meets again the ghosts of his past” (1996, p.101). The decaying gallery is a well-chosen symbol to represent the Old South’s degenerated mores and morals. In pre-Civil War times, the front gallery was symbolic of white superiority over the black population. Apart from its function to provide an escape from the unbearable heat inside the house and to relax in the shade outside, the porch is likewise a place from where the planter could oversee and control his black servants. The porch did thus not only represent the planter’s power and authority – it likewise expressed his idleness.

Furthermore, it was the planter's exploitation of the black workforce that enabled him to get such a big house at all. In *The Sound and the Fury,* the decaying Compson portico signifies that the era of the great Southern plantations and thus its former wealth has long since gone. The decaying portico is thus an apt setting to make Mr. Compson tell the story of Sutpen's rise and downfall.

Porch imagery is an important detail in Faulkner's rendering of Sutpen's trauma. This becomes apparent in Faulkner's decision to let Sutpen undergo his rejection experience on a portico – an upper class status symbol which, by definition, is a roofed porch entrance supported by columns. Studying the image of porches in literature, Donlon writes, "the portico, in its finest form, repeats classical architectural models [...] signifying a house which belongs to an upper class family" (1996, p.99). As Sutpen [the boy] approaches the big plantation house for the first time, he articulates his impressions thus: "the house, the portico, the front door" (AA, p.185). Faulkner renders Sutpen's first perception of the big house in the same way as a filmmaker moves his camera from a long shot (a view of a setting from a distance) to a close-up (a full screen's shot of a particular subject or object). The effect of this cinematic technique is to intensify the significance of the front door as the point of entry into the splendor of the Tidewater plantation. The columns of the portico underline both the significance of the front door as well as the importance of the planter, and Sutpen will soon discover that there are not only differences between "white men and black ones" but also between "white men and white men" (AA, p.183). As Donlon points out, Sutpen learns that "porches are border zones that symbolize economic, social, and racial superiority; they can be 'places' where those who possess the right combination of money, power, and white privilege can assert their property rights to seize control by admitting some and excluding others" (2001, p.96). It is important to note that Faulkner uses the image of the porch in *The Hamlet* as a public space where the community is free to gather, while porches in *Absalom, Absalom!*, by contrast, designate private spaces that exclude certain individuals on the basis of their social standing [class and race].

Another variation of the porch motif in connection with racial issues is to be found in *The Unvanquished*. Here, Faulkner uses the Sartoris front porch to

highlight the different social positions and roles of the black and white characters. When Sartoris returns home during the Civil War, his family is awaiting him thus:

> We – Ringo and I – ran as one […] across the back yard and around the house, where Granny [Miss Rosa] was standing at the top of the front steps […]. […] I [Bayard] mounted the steps and stood beside Granny, and with [the black servants] Ringo and Loosh on the ground below the gallery […]. He [Colonel Sartoris] stopped; he looked at Granny and me on the porch and at Ringo and Loosh on the ground […] (UNV, pp.8, 9).

This excerpt shows how the gallery designates the social hierarchy in the Sartoris house and indicates thus which members of the Sartoris household are of highest and lowest social standing. Faulkner apparently uses the nouns 'gallery' and 'porch' rather freely and interchangeably. In addition to that, Faulkner also uses the porch motif to highlight the genteelness of a real Southern man:

> He [Colonel Sartoris] came towards the steps and began to mount, the sabre heavy and flat at his side. […]. He mounted four of the steps, the sabre […] striking against each one of the steps as he mounted, […], then he stopped and removed his hat. […]. He could have stood on the same level with Granny and he would have only needed to bend his head a little for her to kiss him. But he didn't. He stopped two steps below her, with his head bared and his forehead held for her to touch her lips to, […]. Then he looked at me, who was still looking at him, as Ringo at the foot of the steps beneath still was (UNV, pp.10, 11).

Even though Colonel Sartoris must be physically exhausted from his long ride home or worn out by his wartime experiences, he still keeps the formal rules for polite behavior as demanded by the Old South's etiquette. As a result, Colonel Sartoris appears as a man of outstanding manners and dignity representative of the finest members of the Old South's upper social strata. Yet this excerpt likewise illustrates once again Faulkner's frequent stress of vertical dimensions. In this case, the elevated position of the white characters on the porch clearly signifies who is in power of the Sartoris plantation and who not.

To summarize this chapter briefly, porches [and particularly porticoes] are upper class status symbols mostly connected to Greek Revival Houses. They frequently occur in Faulkner's rendering of the houses of the Sutpens, Sartorises, Compsons, and, of course, in his portrayal of the de Spain / Snopes mansion.

Porches connect the world of the house with the world outside. Since they are set between public and private spaces, they serve as metaphors of liminality. Porches are also symbolic of Southern identity. Thus, porches are frequently used as places for social gathering, storytelling, and interaction between the different [mostly male] characters. Likewise, porches are important places for courtship. Out on the porch, the different sexes are allowed to meet and have a chat. Though they are places for people to become acquainted with the other sex, they are nevertheless no places for having sexual intercourses [as opposed to gardens and woods, where adolescent Faulkner characters usually go to, instead]. Moreover, Faulkner also uses porches as a setting to focus on a family in a moment of crisis.

Although porches are backed by windows and doors, porch imagery is seldom used to render social exclusion. This is also the reason why porch imagery is often used in connection with public buildings like the Varner's store gallery or Miss Littlejohn's veranda, for instance, for porches emphasize the significance of these public spaces as meeting places for the community.

And, to conclude this discussion, porches expose a character to a monitoring community. This is why the different sexes are allowed to meet there. Therefore, porches are places to be seen. Although this aspect shares similarities with the issue of window imagery, Faulkner nevertheless uses these house related images for different purposes. Many an excluded Faulkner character might occasionally be seen framed by a window [Miss Emily, Eula], but these characters are not in the least interested in what the observing community might think about them. On porches, by contrast, where characters are to be seen publicly, characters behave quite different as within the intimate spaces of their private rooms. Therefore, it becomes clear that porches are important means to keep the community under surveillance for a person sitting on the porch can easily be monitored by parents as well as by the community.

### 6.3.5 Fences

Fences are demarcation lines separating private properties from neighboring areas. Fences are thus a central symbol of the frontier myth. Made of wood, stone, or metal, for instance, fences surround the owner's house and territory in order to keep off those who do not belong to the space they enclose. And those who cross fences without permission might experience serious consequences in some jurisdictions. In Texas, to highlight the direst consequence, it is legal to use deadly force against trespassers after dark [Texas Penal Code § 9.42; see also Texas Penal Code § 9.41 and § 30.05 (criminal trespass)]. In Mississippi, the state law (Mississippi Code 97-17-93) forbids all persons to enter private lands without permission from the landowner. Therefore, trespassing is an unacceptable action punishable by a fine and possible imprisonment.

Yet unlike windows, doors, and porches, which connect a house with the outside world, fences are barriers that strongly separate a certain space from its environs. In literature, however, fences are often employed as spatial motifs for the purpose of highlighting a character's exclusion or disassociation from his society. Although Faulkner often employs fence imagery in his writings as a means to express a character's isolation or confinement, for instance, literary criticism has failed to take notice of this recurrent phenomenon so far.

Fence imagery is especially apparent in *The Sound and the Fury*, where many references to fences and gates are given in order to render Benjamin Compson's exclusion from both his family and the world beyond the fence. All the fences that surround the Compson estate are not only instrumental in fencing off other people – they chiefly have to prevent Benjy from getting away because what he desires the most lies on the other side of the fence: his beloved pasture, a space connected with the memories of his sister Caddy. In 1909, Mr. Compson sold Benjy's pasture in order to send Quentin to Harvard. Converted into a golf course now, this pasture is still the symbol of Benjy's very own lost garden of Eden – a space he is no longer allowed to enter. The fence that divides him from his pasture is symbolic of his captivity. Barred behind the fences of the Compson estate, Benjy spends his whole idle days watching the golf players hitting balls:

> Through the fence, between the curling flower spaces, I could see them hitting. They were coming toward where the flag was and I went along the fence. Luster was hitting in the grass by the flower tree. They took the flag out, and they were hitting. Then they put the flag back and they went to the table, and he hit and the other hit. Then they went on and I went along the fence. Luster came away from the flower tree and we went along the fence and they stopped and we stopped and I looked through the fence while Luster was hunting in the grass (SF, p.3).

The recurrent use of the noun "fence" [five times] in the very first paragraph of the novel emphasizes the significance of this boundary for Benjy, for he is caged behind these fences like a wild animal. Benjy's world is thus both characterized and limited by the fence that separates the Compson grounds from the street and the neighboring golf course. In addition to that, the image of Benjy being barred behind fences already foreshadows his future custody in the Jackson asylum (Bleikasten 1976, p.80).

Furthermore, to render him watching the repetitive and monotonous actions of the golf players beyond the fence is a well-chosen image to highlight Benjy's extremely limited mental capabilities. Yet the fence itself also reveals basic data about the eldest Compson son: "We went along the fence and came to the garden fence, where our shadows were. My [Benjy's] shadow was higher than Luster's on the fence" (SF, p.3). This makes clear that Benjy is taller than Luster – hence he has to be older than his black caretaker. All the fences occurring in the novel demarcate borders Benjy is not allowed to cross when being alone. Yet things change when Benjy watches schoolgirls passing by on the other side of the fence,

> I could hear them talking. I went out the door and I couldn't hear them, and I went down to the gate, where the girls passed with their booksatchels. They looked at me, walking fast, with their heads turned. I tried to say, but they went on, and I went along the fence, trying to say, and they went faster. Then they were running and I came to the corner of the fence and I couldn't go any further, and I held to the fence, looking after them and trying to say. […] "You cant do no good, moaning and slobbering through the fence." T.P. said. "You done skeered them chillen. Look at them, walking on the other side of the street" (SF, p.33).

Like the schoolgirls passing by, who make Benjy think of Caddy, the gate itself is a constant reminder of his caring sister, as well: ”He think if he down to the gate, Miss Caddy come back” (SF, p.33). This is also the reason why Benjy stands down at the gate waiting for his sister to return home almost every day because she was the only Compson child that showed affection to him. Yet due to his retardation, he is not able to comprehend that Caddy will never come back to the Compsons, “You can’t do no good looking through the gate, T.P. said. Miss Caddy done gone long ways away. Done got married and left you. You can’t do no good, holding to the gate and crying. She cant hear you” (SF, p.33).

When he is out there at the fence waiting for Caddy day by day, Benjy has no idea that he behaves like a watchdog that scares away all the children. In 1913, however, Benjy is finally able to open the gate and he attacks a young girl, Caroline Burgess – an action that leads to his castration operation:

> They came on, I opened the gate and they stopped, turning. I was trying to say, and caught her, trying to say, and she screamed and I was trying to say and trying and the bright shapes began to stop and I tried to get out. I tried to get it off of my face, but the bright shapes were going again. They were going up the hill to where it fell away and I tried to cry. But when I breathed in, I couldn’t breathe out again to cry, and I tried to keep from falling off the hill and I fell off the hill into the bright, whirling shapes (SF, p.34)

In his troubled recollections of this event, Benjy fuses the memory of this attack [“and she screamed”] with his castration operation [“and I was trying to say and trying and the bright shapes began to stop and I tried to get out”], which is his penalty for touching the Burgess’ child and thus for violating this borderline. This incident is told again in the third section of the book when Jason thinks about Mr. Burgess punishing Benjy: “I don’t reckon he even knew what he had been trying to do, or why Mr. Burgess knocked him out with a fence picket” (SF, p.164).

Elsewhere in the first section of the book, Faulkner employs fence imagery to render the affair between Uncle Maury and Mrs. Patterson. The text cited below shows how Uncle Maury sends [the now gelded and thus harmless] Benjy to deliver a message to his sweetheart, the married neighbor Mrs. Patterson, but her husband is able to intercept this letter as he is quicker than his wife:

> Mr. Patterson was chopping in the green flowers. He stopped chopping and looked at me [Benjy]. Mrs. Patterson came across the garden, running. When I saw her eyes I began to cry. You idiot, Mrs. Patterson said, I told him never to send you alone again. Give it to me. Quick. Mr. Patterson came fast, with the hoe. Mrs. Patterson leaned across the fence, reaching her hand. She was trying to climb the fence. Give it to me, she said, Give it to me. Mr. Patterson climbed the fence. He took the letter. Mrs. Patterson's dress was caught on the fence. I saw her eyes again and I ran down the hill (SF, p.9).

Once again, Benjy is confronted with a fence that keeps him from a world he cannot comprehend. Benjy has no idea what he is doing when he delivers Maury's message. In this context, fence imagery serves two distinct purposes. On the one hand, this fence is a dividing line separating Mr. Patterson's wife from Uncle Maury's sexual desire. On the other hand, this fence is also a symbol of Mrs. Patterson's entrapment in an apparently unhappy marriage from which she seeks an escape, or at least distraction, when she is starting an affair with Maury.

Her attempt to climb the fence that separates her home from Uncle Maury's sphere of activity is a fitting image to render Mrs. Patterson's adultery. This fence is thus neither able to keep off suitors tomcatting around nor high enough to make Mrs. Patterson stick to her husband. Her endeavor to climb the fence leads to the end of her love affair – as indicated by Maury's eye that is blackened by Mr. Patterson, "Uncle Maury was sick. His eye was sick, and his mouth" (SF, p.27).

If one consults the concordance to *The Sound and the Fury*, one can see that the word "fence" appears 58 times, and the term "gate" 46 times throughout the whole book. It is important to note that 34 occurrences of the word "fence" take place in the first section of the book. Fence imagery is thus the leitmotif used to render Benjy's physical and spiritual exclusion from the world that surrounds him. Benjy neither belongs to the Jefferson community, nor is he a real member of the Compson house, where Jason and Miss Quentin constantly chide him. His sphere of activity is the space along the fence. It is the place most distant from the house and therefore an apt symbol of his exclusion from familial love.

In "That will be fine", Faulkner uses fence imagery linked to a boy narrator to render again an adulterous love affair between a man and a married woman. Published six years after *The Sound and the Fury*, this short story focuses on the

love affair between a character called Uncle Rodney and his paramour, Mrs. Tucker. Like Benjy in *The Sound and the Fury*, the boy narrator in this story, Georgie, has little understanding of what he is really doing for his uncle. And like Jason, Georgie is eager to earn money and Rodney pays him for some favors. This is why Georgie, for instance, waits behind the fence surrounding the Tucker house in order to give his uncle a sign that Mrs. Tucker is home alone: "So I [Georgie] would go on ahead and watch through Mr. Tucker's fence until he came out to go to town and I would go along behind the fence to the corner and watch until Mr. Tucker was out of sight and then I would put my hat on top of the fence post and leave it there until I saw Mr. Tucker coming back" (CS, p.268). Elsewhere in the story, Georgie again helps his uncle and fools a policeman who is asking him about Uncle Rodney's whereabouts. Once more, fence imagery is instrumental in conveying this incident:

> Because I had been watching the man all afternoon, […]. But I did, because once when he was walking past the back fence and he stopped and lit his cigar again and I saw the badge under his coat when he struck the match and so I knew he was like Mr. Watts at Jefferson that catches the niggers. So I was playing by the fence and I could hear him stopping and looking at me and I played […]. […] "I wonder if your Uncle Rodney's at home this afternoon" [said the policeman]. "No, sir," I said. […]. "Well, well," he said "You mean he's gone away on a visit, maybe?" "Yes, sir," I said. "Well, well," he said. "That's too bad. I wanted to see him on a little business. But I reckon it can wait." Then he looked at me and then he said, "You're sure he's out of town, then?" "Yes, sir," I said. […] So he went away. And he didn't pass the house any more. I watched for him, but he didn't come back. So he couldn't fool me either (CS, p.277).

In this story, fences are the crucial images used to symbolize Georgie's very limited understanding of what he is actually doing for his uncle. In a figurative sense, the boy is still not able to overcome the barrier that keeps him from seeing Uncle Rodney as the character he really is: a scoundrel and adulterer. As Volpe notes, the boy narrator serves as a registering consciousness with very little comprehension for Georgie "records the conversations and actions of the adults, but he does not understand what his mind registers" (Volpe 2004, p.212).

At the end of the story, Georgie's naïveté and foolishness are Rodney's undoing for Georgie is ignorant of the consequences of his actions when Mr. Tucker intercepts him as he tries to deliver a message to Mrs. Tucker. Having thus informed Mr. Tucker about Rodney's plan [to run away with his wife and her jewelry], Georgie remains completely blind to the fact that he has sentenced his uncle to death for Mr. Tucker and some men from Mottstown lie in ambush to kill Rodney. In a passage shortly before Rodney's death, Georgie again walks along a fence when he suddenly hears firecrackers and skyrockets shooting up into the sky. This is why he is not able to understand that the noise of "firecrackers back at the house where Uncle Rodney had gone" (p.285) is in fact the sound of guns that kill his Uncle. Like Benjy, Georgie is another child character that is confronted with a world he could not comprehend. In this respect, all the fences that keep him from getting a deeper understanding of Rodney's true character symbolize his very limited awareness of his own involvement in Rodney's machinations.

Faulkner presents another variation of a love triangle linked with fence imagery in "A Justice". In this short story, which is a parable of segregation, a fence is employed as a means to render justice to a black slave whose wife has been coveted and taken by an Indian called Craw-ford.

After his wife gives birth to a yellow-skinned baby, the black servant knows that Craw-ford has abused her and asks the Indian chief Doom to do him justice. At the end of the story, Doom orders his childhood friend Craw-ford to build a fence around the slave's cabin to keep him off from the slave's wife. This fence is way too high for Craw-ford to climb, but the slave has no problems to climb it,

> "He told me [Sam Fathers] how they [Crawford and Herman Basket] worked on the fence all that winter and all the next summer, until after the whiskey trader had come and gone. Then it was finished. He said that on the day they set the last post, the nigger came out of the cabin and put his hand on the top of a post (it was a palisade fence, the posts set upright in the ground) and flew out like a bird. 'This is a good fence,' the nigger said. 'Wait,' he said. 'I have something to show you.' Herman Basket said he flew back over the fence again and went into the cabin and came back. Herman Basket said that he was carrying a new man and that he held the new man up so they could see it above the fence. 'What do you think about the color?' he said" (CS, p.359).

The “new man” is, of course, the child of the slave and his wife. According to Volpe, “By forcing his childhood friend to build a fence around the slave’s house, Doom acknowledges the humanity of the blacks, recognizes the slave’s love for his wife and his right to her“ (2004, p.112). Yet Volpe’s view of Doom’s deed is far too positive for he neglects an important fact: although justice seems to be done, the slave’s wife is henceforth condemned to live a life excluded from her people. The fence that divides her from Craw-ford likewise separates her from all communal life within the Indians’ plantation. Thus, real justice has not been done.

Yet in Faulkner’s writings, fence imagery serves far more different purposes than to render illegitimate sexual relationships between characters or to express a child or child-like character’s limited understanding of the adult’s world.

In some of his short stories and novels dealing with the Civil War and its aftermath, for instance, Faulkner utilizes fence imagery quite differently. In “Ambuscade”, the first section of *The Unvanquished*, Faulkner again uses child characters and fence symbolism to render the effects of the Civil War on children and indicates thus their perverted state of mind. In the opening scene of the novel, Bayard and his slave companion Ringo scrape a kind of map into the earth that roughly resembles the frontlines of the battling Union and Confederate armies:

> Behind the smokehouse that summer, Ringo and I [Bayard] had a living map. Although Vicksburg was just a handful of chips from the woodpile and the River a trench scraped into the packed earth with the point of a hoe, it (river, city, and terrain) lived, possessing even in miniature that ponderable though passive recalcitrance of topography which outweighs artillery, against which the most brilliant of victories and the most tragic of defeats are but the loud noises of a moment (UNV, p.3).

While playing a game that imitates the battle for Vicksburg, Bayard and Ringo demonstrate that they are familiar with the significance of borders and the need to defend them. Yet what starts as a mere game ends up in a serious affair: when the boys see a Yankee cavalry approaching the Sartoris estate, they first seek shelter behind a fence [a barrier demarcating a space that has to be defended at all cost], before Bayard takes a shot at one of the Union soldiers arriving at the gate [point of entry into the sanctum sanctorum]:“ ‘We killed him, Granny! At the

gate. Only there was the whole army too and we never saw them and now they are coming – " (UNV, p.27). Acting out the role [soldier] he has adopted from his father Colonel Sartoris, Bayard has no idea that his action might have led to the killing of an innocent man. In the end, Bayard, however, failed to kill any Union soldiers and the short story ends in a humorous vein showing the boys washing their mouths with soap – a penalty for having used swearwords in Granny's presence. Yet Bayard's act of trying to shoot a Union soldier who was trying to enter the Sartoris place is neither sanctioned nor punished in any kind of way.

In "Mountain Victory", on the other hand, Faulkner presents the violent encounter between a poor Tennessee mountain family and a Confederate officer returning home after the Civil War. The mountain family, an isolated bunch of Unionists within a former Confederate state, watches the Confederate soldier and his black servant approaching their cabin, not knowing how to deal with these strangers: "Through the cabin window the five people watched the cavalcade toil up the muddy trail and halt at the gate. […] Through the window they watched the horses stop at the gate. […] They watched the creature [Jubal] enter the gate and mount the path and disappear beyond the angle of the window" (CS, pp.745, 746).

For Vatch, a former Union soldier and eldest son of the family, the Confederate officer's passing the gate is an act of trespass and his immediate reaction is to get a gun to shoot these trespassers. Yet Vatch's father prevents him from killing these intruders [at least for now] for he knows that these men will do no harm: "They have surrendered. They have said they are whipped" (CS, p.745).

Although Vatch knows that the two Southerners will pose no threat to him, he fully intends to kill them for the simple reason of fearing and hating all Confederate soldiers. As Vatch's younger brother says, "I used to sleep with him [Vatch] and he wakes up at night and once paw had to keep him from choking me to death before he waked up and him sweating, hearing you uns yelling still. Without nothing but unloaded guns, yelling, Vatch said, like scarecrows across a cornpatch, running" (CS, p.767). For Volpe, Vatch's terror "forces him to face up to his own weakness, and he has to strike out, eradicate the tangible proof of his own limitations". Thus, Vatch's rage is "a response to his own inadequacies, not a defense of an ideology" (Volpe 2004, p.150). At the end of the novel, Vatch acts

on principle and, aided by his father, he waits in ambush in order to kill the wounded veteran and his servant. Yet things turn out differently as planned and Vatch does not only kill the rebel soldiers, but his younger brother Hule, too.

In the context of fence imagery, the mountain family's fence and gate demarcate a space that is symbolic of Vatch's [and thus of many Yeoman's] hatred of the Confederacy and the Old South's plantation society as represented by Major Weddel – even though Vatch's space is located within Tennessee, a state that once belonged to the Confederacy and thus to its ideology and culture. Vatch's killing of these intruders is his way of dealing with loathed enemies who have dared to enter the fenced grounds of his very own ideologically charged realm – a space that also is symbolic of Vatch's own limitations and vulnerability.

In "Barn Burning", another short story set in postbellum Yoknapatawpha County, Faulkner uses fence imagery as a means to render Abner Snopes' refusal to acknowledge any kind of authorities or limitations set upon him. This becomes particularly clear in the way he deals with somebody else's property:

> That night they camped, in a grove of oaks and beeches where a spring ran. The nights were cool and they had a fire against it, of a rail lifted from a nearby fence and cut into lengths – a small fire, neat, niggard almost, a shrewd fire; such fires were his father's habit and custom always, even in freezing weather (CS, p.7).

For Towner and Carothers, the damaged fence indicates that Abner and his family are camping on someone else's well-kept land. Despite the fact that they camp in a grove of trees, they don't pick up any wood or fallen timber for their fire – they prefer to damage someone else's property, instead (2006, p.9). It is important to note that Abner uses the fence rail for a fire – thus he is already foreshadowing what is going to happen with his next landlord's property [his barn], as well.

While Abner Snopes damages and burns a fence to show his independence, his kin Mink Snopes, on the other hand, is forced to build a fence as compensation for his neighbor Zack Houston, on whose pasture and expenditures Mink has wintered a cow in order to save a little money. Faulkner offered this episode first in *The Hamlet,* later he presents this incident again – though more elaborately – in *The Mansion*. The latter novel shows how Mink tries to climb Houston's fence in

order to fetch his cow, but Houston asks him to stay away from the fence. Mink immediately stops to climb Houston's fence for he knows that his armed opponent is allowed to use deadly force against him:

> "Dont cross that fence, Snopes," Houston said.
> "Well well," Mink said, one leg over the top rail, the coil of rope dangling from one raw-red hand, "dont tell me you bring a pistol along ever time you try to buy a cow. Maybe you even tote it to put a cottonseed or a grain of corn in the ground too?" It was a tableau: Mink with one leg over the top rail, Houston standing inside the fence, the pistol hanging in one hand against his leg, the Negro [Houston's servant] not moving either, not looking at anything, the whites of his eyes just showing a little (MAN, p.692).

Mink learns that things did not turn out the way he planned and instead of saving a little money, he now has to pay eight dollars and seventy-five cents before he can return home with his cow – a sum that represents more than all of his savings. As a consequence, Mink is ordered to build a fence around one of Houston's pastures to repay all his debts to the last cent: "'Then he'll have to work it out,' Varner said. He was talking to Houston now. 'What have you got that he can do?' 'I'm going to fence in another pasture,' Houston said. 'He can make thirty-seven days and from light till noon on the next one digging post holes and stringing wire'" (MAN, p.694). For Mink, this fence becomes a symbol of all the limitations set upon him. Being a poor and dehumanized tenant farmer, Mink is not able to protest against building this fence. Seen this way, the fence is virtually a token of all the forces that oppress him and which cause his inferior social and economic standing.

After thirty-seven days of hard work erecting the fence, Mink wants to fetch his cow but Houston again refuses to return the cow because Mink still owes him a one-dollar pound fee or two days of work: "'The pound fee,' Houston said. 'The law says that when anybody has to take up a stray animal and the owner dont claim it before dark that same day, the man that took it up is entitled to a one-dollar pound fee'" (MAN, p.701). Feeling thus betrayed by the powers to be, Mink prepares an ambush and kills Houston in cold-blood – not for having erected the fence for him, but for being forced to pay the one-dollar pound fee:

> "I aint shooting you because of them thirty-seven and a half four-bit days. That's all right; I done long ago forgot and forgive that. Likely Will Varner couldn't do nothing else, being a rich man too and all you rich folks has got to stick together or else maybe some day the ones that aint rich might take a notion to raise up and take it away from you. That aint why I shot you. I killed you because of that-ere extry one-dollar pound fee" (MAN, p.713).

In chapter fourteen of *The Mansion*, Faulkner employs fence imagery in a Snopes context, once again. Here, a fence is instrumental in Flem's scheme of getting hold of an important strip of land. After having bought the old Compson grounds from Jason except "for a little holding in one corner owned by a crotchety old man named Meadowfill" (MAN, p.969), Flem starts building houses on this valuable location. Unfortunately, old Meadowfill's corner on this lot is exactly the preferred location where an oil company wants to build a filling station. Since Meadowfill refuses to sell this strip of land which would cut "the oil company off from its proposed corner station as effectively as a toll gate" (MAN, p.976), Flem needs to trick old Meadowfill into giving him that strip of land – for otherwise the oil company declines to buy any part of Snopes's land. This is why Flem orders Orestes [Res] Snopes to move into the former Compson's carriage house located next to Meadowfill's "little unwired un-plumbing-ed house" (p. 970). As soon as Res moves into this house, he fences up the adjacent ground into lots and becomes engaged in the business of buying and selling cattle and hogs. This, of course, outrages the old grouch, and Res starts an "active kind of guerilla feud" (p.970) with Meadowfill, in which Res is using hogs as a weapon against the old man:

> Then Flem Snopes let Jason Compson overreach himself out of his ancestral acres, and Res Snopes built a hog lot along the boundary of old Meadowfill's orchard and made a new man of old Meadowfill. Because the trespassing of little boys merely broke a limb now and then, and stray dogs merely dug up flower beds if he had had flower beds. But one rooting hog could foul and sour and make sterile the very dirt itself. […] [Now Meadowfill had a reason to watch] Res and a hired Negro built the wire fence along his boundary, […] (p. 972).

When Meadowfill learns that he will get a one dollar fee from Res in case one of his hogs gets onto his grounds, the old man is constantly on watch behind his window, hoping to find one of Snopes's hogs rummaging around in his orchard:

> One morning when Meadowfill wheeled his chair from the breakfast table to the window and looked out, he saw what he had been waiting to see for over a year now: a loose hog rooting among the worthless peaches beneath his worthless and untended trees, and even as he sat bellowing for Mrs. Meadowfill, Snopes himself crossed the yard with an ear of corn and a loop of rope and snared the hog by one foot and half-drove half-led it back across the yard and out of sight, old Meadowfill leaning from the [wheel] chair into the open window, bellowing curses at both of them even after they had disappeared (MAN, p.977).

As the same hog appears on Meadowfill's unfenced grounds again on the next day, the old man gets his rifle, "an aged, battered single-shot .22," and loads it with "tiny shot such as naturalists use: incapable of killing the hog at all and even of hurting it much at this distance" (MAN, p.978) As Gavin Stevens remarks, "Meadowfill didn't even really want to drive the hog away: he simply wanted to shoot it every day as other people play croquet or bingo" (p.978). Indeed, whenever the hog enters Meadowfill's grounds, the old man takes his rifle and shoots at it. And this grotesque behavior is perfectly in concordance with Flem's scheme. As it eventually turns out, Flem wants the old man to shoot at the hog…

> […] until finally […], by either error or mistake or maybe simple rage, […] Meadowfill would put a solid bullet in the gun; whereupon Snopes would not merely sue him for killing the hog, he would invoke the town ordinance against firing guns inside the city limits, and between the two of them somehow blackmail Meadowfill into making his, Snopes's, lot available to the oil company (MAN, p.979).

Of course, one day Meadowfill indeed puts a solid bullet in his rifle and shoots at the hog – but the old man fails to kill it. When, on the next morning, the hog once more gets onto Meadowfill's unfenced grounds and rummages around his orchard, the old man again grabs his rifle and aims at the hog. In the instant the old man raises the screen porch in order to be able to shoot at the hog from his window, he is suddenly interrupted by Gavin Stevens who rushes into Meadowfill's house and tells him not to raise the screen – for otherwise a shot from a "neat homemade booby trap" (p.986) hidden in a peach tree would have "hit him square in the face" (p.986). As Gavin finds out, this trap was arranged there in order to make the old man that angry that he takes revenge against the only man who

might be able to conceive of such a kind of murderous trap: his future son-in-law McKinley Smith – for nobody else "except a Pacific veteran would have invented a booby trap" (p.987). It becomes apparent that Snopes's new plan to get hold of the desired plot of land was either to kill Meadowfill or to make the old man kill his daughter's sweetheart. In order to settle this affair once and for all, Stevens consults Res Snopes, returns his booby trap, and forces him to deed the disputed land to Essie Meadowfill so she can marry McKinley Smith.

Unlike the fence incident involving Mink Snopes in the first chapter of the novel, the second fence incident in chapter thirteen of *The Mansion*, which is a revised version of the unpublished short story "Hog Pawn" (1955), is clearly in the humorous vein and shows how Gavin Stevens helps justice to triumph.

In the novels *Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!*, as well as in the early short story "Evangeline", Faulkner surrounds houses and grounds with fences in order to make clear that the characters inhabiting these spaces are outsiders who are somehow different from the Jefferson society. In these stories, fence imagery is instrumental in demarcating spaces that racially or ideologically diverge from their environs – like the Unionists' space and cabin in "Mountain Victory".

In *Light in August*, to begin with, the reader is able to trace an enclave on the map of Yoknapatawpha that has a stance towards the race issue completely different from its environs. In this novel, the fence that surrounds Joanna Burden's plantation is used to indicate that she is not an accepted member of the Jefferson society. Miss Burden, whose grandfather and half-brother had been shot by Colonel Sartoris over a question of Negro voting rights, supports black people in order to continue her grandfather's work. Her estate is thus a kind of sanctuary for the blacks. Like the Unionists' grounds and cabin within a state of the former Confederacy in "Mountain Victory", Miss Burden's house and grounds represents another Northern enclave within the South. As Vickery notes, "despite her birth in Jefferson", Miss Burden "is a 'Northerner' in the eyes of the town, and hence she is automatically aligned with the 'Negro' and the 'Damned'" (1964, p.68). Volpe adds, black people "are the cross she must carry" (2001, p.170). But as a result of her struggle to empower the black population, the white people of Jefferson exclude her – which is also the reason why Miss Burden has become a spinster.

Yet things change when the racially ambiguous Joe Christmas emerges and lives in a shack near her house. Being convinced that Joe has Negro blood in his veins, Miss Burden is attracted to him and they start a bizarre sexual relationship on her very own terms. This is why Joe, for instance, has to watch out for secret messages kept in a hollow fence post:

> She revealed an unexpected and infallible instinct for intrigue. She insisted on a place for concealing notes, letters. It was in a hollow fence post below the rotting stable. He never saw her put a note there, yet she insisted on his visiting it daily; when he did so, the letter would be there. When he did not and lied to her, he would find that she had already set up traps to catch him in the lie; she cried, wept (LIA, p.259).

Here, Faulkner once more shows his awareness of using liminal spaces. The fence, of course, denotes a liminal space that neither belongs to Miss Burden's estate [a space in favor of blacks] nor to the adjacent spaces surrounding her grounds [a space not in favor of blacks]. The fence post is therefore set on a place between two bordering areas that share completely different views towards black people and their social standing in the Jefferson society.

Yet the fence post itself is not only a fitting location to hide secret messages for Joe Christmas, it is at the same time an apt metaphor for this character. Due to the fact that he is unsure whether he has Negro blood or not, Joe Christmas will remain forever in a state of limbo. There cannot be a middle ground for Christmas as long as he is not able to identify his true racial origin. Like the fence post set between the Burden estate and its environs [and thus between two differently charged spaces], Christmas oscillates between two conflicting states of affairs: either he is black or he is white. Whatever his racial identity may be, he is worse off than Joanna Burden: while Joanna is merely excluded from the white community, Joe gets rejected by both the black and the white community.

Racial issues and white man's fear of miscegenation are also at the very core of *Absalom, Absalom!* and "Evangeline". In the short story, Sutpen's estate is not surrounded by a fence, but Faulkner refers to the gate leading to the big house, where the narrator ponders what to do next: "I stopped where the rusted and now hingeless iron gate gave upon the road and I stood there for a while, in

the myriad, peaceful, summer country midnight" (US, 605). To stay within the gate symbolizes the narrator's insecurity whether to go back to the mansion or to leave this place behind. In the novel, by contrast, Faulkner surrounds the mansion and its ruined fields with fallen fences, and the gate itself becomes the location of the final confrontation between Henry Sutpen and Charles Bon.

> "[…], the ultimatum discharged before the gate to which the two of them must have ridden side by side almost: the one calm and undeviating, perhaps unresisting even, the fatalist to the last; the other remorseless with implacable and unalterable grief and despair –" (It seemed to Quentin that he could actually see them, facing one another at the gate. […]. They faced one another on the two gaunt horses, two men, young, not yet in the world, not yet breathed over long enough, […], the one with the tarnished braid of an officer, the other plain of cuff, […], the two faces calm, the voices not even raised: *Dont you pass the shadow of this post, this branch, Charles*; and *I am going to pass it, Henry*) – and then Wash Jones sitting that saddleless mule before Miss Rosa's gate, shouting her name into the sunny and peaceful quiet of the street, saying, 'Air you Rosie Goldfield? Then you better come on out yon. Henry has done shot that durn French feller. Kilt him dead as a beef'" (AA, pp.105, 106).

For Henry, the gate leading to his father's house is a border Charles Bon is no longer allowed to pass because of his mixed racial origin. The Sutpen grounds beyond the gate are a space charged with Henry Sutpen's racial hatred and his fear of miscegenation. As a consequence, Henry would rather commit fratricide than have his sister marry a man of mixed blood.

To summarize this chapter briefly, fences and gates in Faulkner's stories are recurrently used on a metaphorical plane. Although fences and gates are spatial motifs, their task is not solely to demarcate private property – instead, their main task is to enclose and defend a private sphere that is socially, racially, or ideologically divergent from its environs. In this respect, the mountain family's grounds in "Mountain Victory" are spheres symbolizing Vatch's hatred of his low social status and Southern plantation society in general. Miss Burden's place in *Light in August* is a sphere that is in favor of the black race as opposed to its environs. Sutpen's Hundred, then, is a sphere created by an outsider who came from nowhere and established the biggest plantation in whole Yoknapatawpha.

This place finds its downfall when the white man's conviction of being superior to the black race leads to the killing of an innocent black man. In this novel, again, Faulkner charges a certain sphere with racial prejudices and racial fears.

Fence imagery in *The Sound and the Fury* rather serves as an expression of a character's state of mind. In the same way as Benjy's intellectual capabilities are strictly limited, so is his sphere of activity also severely restricted by the fence that keeps him from going away. The fence is the dominant symbol used to express his exclusion from both his family and his society. Caged like a wild animal, Benjy can only look at his beloved pasture but he will never be able to go back there, again. In *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner transferred the concept of the spatial motif onto the psychological dimension of a character. As a consequence, Benjy's physical restriction aptly mirrors his cognitive restriction. Faulkner uses this concept again in "That Will Be Fine" to render Georgie's limited comprehension of his own actions. In addition to that, fence imagery is used twice to render the inclusion of a female character [the unnamed black wife in "A Justice" and Mrs. Patterson]. On the other hand, fence imagery is four times employed to render male exclusion [Uncle Rodney, Mink, Weddel, and Benjy]. The Meadowfill incident highlights the significance of trespass in Faulkner's writings. Trespass is also an important aspect in *Absalom, Absalom!* since Charles Bon's attempt to pass the gate leading to the open door of the Sutpen house is his undoing. Moreover, fence imagery used in this novel clearly has racial overtones.

In "Ambuscade", fence imagery is used to as a means to exclude the Union army from invading the Sartoris estate whereas in "Mountain Victory", quite the contrary, fences demarcate spaces that are explicitly excluding those who once belonged to the former Confederacy.

Since fences are instrumental in highlighting the relevance of territory and thus in defining a collective identity, they do fulfill the eighth criterion of a house-based society as defined by González-Ruibal [see chapter four].

Apart from Brown's article, "Benjy, the Reader, and Death" [not useful in this discussion] and a brief remark on fences in *The Sound and the Fury* by Bleikasten in *The Most Splendid Failure* and Bourgois in "Documents fournis par Mme. A. Bourgois", there is no further literary criticism available on this topic.

Fences, then, can be seen as a means to protect the integrity and security of an individual's home. While houses in the Yoknapatawpha cycle represent the 'sense of the past' and thus the preservation of conservative values and traditions, roads, on the other hand, signify the advent of modernism, change, and progress in Yoknapatawpha. Beyond the fenced estates of the fictional characters, however, the reader is presented with a system of roads that connects all the public and private houses in Faulkner's literary space. In *Requiem for a Nun*, Faulkner compares this system of roads with "veins" and "arteries" along which flows "the aggrandizement of harvest: the gold: the cotton and the grain" (p.35). Therefore, the network of roads and byroads covering Faulkner's county is as indispensable as the tubes that carry blood through the human body.

For one thing, Faulkner often employs road imagery to show how characters liberate themselves from normative demands. In this instance, young characters in revolt against the prevailing order substitute the car for the porch to date the other sex [Cecily Saunders, Temple Drake, Gowan Stevens, Elly], they ride in carriages or buggies through the town [Miss Emily], or they leave by train to escape from the repressive order of Jefferson's society [Miss Quentin, Harry Wilbourne, Charlotte Rittenmayer, Hawkshaw]. Moreover, Elly does not even shrink from killing her grandmother in a car crash to be liberated from her authority. Similarly, Bayard Sartoris (II) also dies in a car crash caused by his grandson Bayard III who habitually drives his car way too fast to get away from what is oppressing him.

Other Yoknapatawphians first use the car to be free and independent and, upon learning that the car fails to set them free, they decide to retreat into the air. Some of these aviators are doomed to fail [John Sartoris II, Bayard Sartoris III, and Uncle Willy], while others travel from town to town in order to make a living as barnstormers [Jock, Ginsfarb, Jake ("Death Drag"), Roger Shumann, Jack Holmes (*Pylon*), Buck Monaghan and Howard Rogers ("Honor")].

In addition to that, railways also allow poor whites and blacks to escape from their landlords to start somewhere else anew. Likewise, other Yoknapataw-phians use the plane to travel overseas to the Old World [Linda Snopes Kohl].

In this respect, one can assert that mobility and locomotion contribute significantly to changes in the social structure of Faulkner's literary domain.

# 7.Conclusion

House imagery in Faulkner serves far more purposes than to merely create atmospheric descriptions of spatial locations of action or to render the living conditions of some selected characters. In fact, Faulkner's fictitious buildings represent a multi-layered symbol system that demarcates class distinctions, racial boundaries, and limitations set upon some characters [mostly unmarried females or male recluses]. Ranging from crazy shacks to impressive or decaying mansions, Faulkner's imaginary houses refer both to the pinnacle of the plantation system of the Old South as well as to its downfall and the advent of a new social and economic system in the New South. Moreover, house imagery is also used to convey the social history and urban development of modern Yoknapatawpha.

Private and public houses are ubiquitous structures in Faulkner's writings – they occur in almost every novel and short story written by the Southern author, but their uses vary from story to story. To that end, this conclusion summarizes the functions of the house motif and related imagery in Faulkner as follows:

1. In Faulkner, to begin with, houses are not only physical places but also social units. If one applies the nine criteria defining the concept of a house-based society onto the imaginary society of Yoknapatawpha County [see chapter 4] – as shown in the previous chapters of this dissertation – one can see that Faulkner's fictitious world is indeed a sociétes à maison á la Lévi-Strauss.

Yoknapatawpha is characterized by a hierarchical organization in which houses are key symbolic elements in the community [churches, courthouse, banks, stores, jail, mansions, and plantations]. The courthouse and the jail, for instance, are institutions administering justice, law and order. Most of the houses in Faulkner's County are the focus of ordinary and sometimes extraordinary activities. In Yoknapatawpha County, houses are also areas for social competition. This becomes apparent in Faulkner's rendering of the lives of Flem Snopes and Thomas Sutpen. As soon as Flem becomes the owner of the de Spain mansion, he changes the venerable house into a "colonial monstrosity" and thus into a prestige object that reflects his social position. Similarly, Sutpen's rise to power and wealth finds likewise expression in the monumentality of his big house.

Some houses in the Yoknapatawpha canon refer to recurrent family names and to titles of nobility [General Compson, Colonel Sartoris, or Major de Spain]. In this regard, 'Sutpen's Hundred' not only denotes the physical structure of an edifice – it also refers to the family dwelling within [like Poe's House of Usher].

In Faulkner's world, then, houses clearly designate lineages and permanence. As a general rule, houses will be passed on the principle of primogeniture. This fact becomes clear if one considers the genealogies of old established families such as, for instance, the Compsons, Sartoris, or McCaslins. Dowries, a woman's contribution to a marriage, also occur in Faulkner's world. Eula Varner's dowry, for example, enables Flem to leave the little hamlet behind.

In view of these facts one can conclude that all the public and private houses in Jefferson and its environs not only demarcate a certain territory shared by many characters but, furthermore, these houses are also instrumental in defining the collective identity of the Jefferson community. Faulkner's houses are thus the key symbols to organize and structure the society of Yoknapatawpha County. In this regard, Faulkner's fictional world is, beyond question, a house-based society.

The table below shows which types of houses correspond with each of the nine criteria defined by González-Ruibal to distinguish a house-based society from a kinship-based society (2006, p.146) [see also chapter 4]:

| Criterion as defined by González-Ruibal | House Types in Faulkner |
|---|---|
| 1. Ranked systems, or societies that are undergoing major social transformations towards a more hierarchical organization. | Plantation houses; stores, banks; |
| 2. Unclear or mixed descent system. | Sartoris Bank; |
| 3. Houses must be key symbolic elements in the community at issue. […]. | Plantation houses, stores, jail, mansions, banks, courthouse; |
| 4. Houses must be an arena for social competition […]. | Town houses, mansions; |
| 5. The existence of titles of nobility, recurrent family names, etc. […]. | Plantation houses, mansions; banks; |
| 6. Heirlooms and elements of rank which are inherited. | Plantation houses, mansions; |
| 8. The relevance of territory for defining a collective identity […]. | The County, fenced private properties; |
| 9. Explicit references to houses as social units. | Plantation houses; |

According to González-Ruibal, these elements should ideally be attested to track a house-based society, though it is important to note that the absence of the second criterion does not imply the absence of a house society at all (2006, p.146).

Interestingly, Faulkner time and again contrasts the traditional house-based society of his Southern towns and villages with the kinship-based society of the Snopes clan, whose intrusion into Yoknapatawpha County recurrently challenges the customs, social behavior, and moral values of these established societies.

2. The house motif and elementary co-occurrences like doors, windows, and fences, for example, symbolize a segregated society. Serving as a mirror image of Southern history and reality, then, the fictional domain of Yoknapatawpha County reflects the social inequalities between the different classes, races, and sexes in the societies of both antebellum and postbellum South.

3. Faulkner derives the house motif from the Gothic tradition, where the image of the house is often employed to represent a *character*, and he develops this motif in his writings to a complex symbol system in which the image of the house becomes allegoric of a whole *society*. This becomes clear in the table below which illustrates the functions of private and public houses as well as related imagery in Faulkner.

| Chapter | Aspect | Function in Faulkner's Writings |
|---|---|---|
| **6.1** | **Private Houses** | - Places for individuals and families - |
| 6.1.1 | *Plantation House*<br>[white planter class] | Symbol of the bygone era of the Old South with its plantation economy and slave system;<br>In ruins, they symbolize the advent of a new order; |
| 6.1.2 | *Mansions*<br>[white upper class] | Symbol of wealth and power in antebellum South;<br>Symbol of class distinctions and social injustice;<br>Most visible icon of a character's respectability; |
| 6.1.3 | *Town Houses*<br>[white middle class] | For female characters: prison-like edifices;<br>For male characters: sanctuaries, marker of class;<br>Unlike two-storied houses, bungalows are houses for the lower white middle class; |
| 6.1.4 | *Cabins*<br>[lower classes]<br>(black and white) | Unlike upper and middle class houses, cabins are set in the outskirts of the town ["Negro Hollow"];<br>Cabins are dwellings for the lowest classes;<br>Cabins are usually one- or two-roomed dwellings;<br>They are symbolic of utter poverty and complete dependence on a landowner [feudal system]; |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | Cabins also represent black life and culture since cabins are typical dwellings for black characters;<br>Black characters call cabins a house or a home while white characters always label them cabins;<br>When used as a counterpoint to a mansion or a big house, cabins stress the unjust property situations of both poor black and white characters;<br>Shacks, by contrast, are dwellings for outcasts; |
| **6.2** | **Public Houses** | - Symbolic of white man's order in Yoknapatawpha County - |
| 6.2.1 | *Stores* | Serving social and commercial purposes;<br>They are links between farmers and banks;<br>They are places where cotton is traded:<br>Instrumental in the exploitation of sharecroppers;<br>Signify the rise of a new mercantile middle class; |
| 6.2.2 | *Courthouse and Jail* | Symbol of white man's law and order;<br>Symbolic of a legal system that supported slavery;<br>They are whitewashed to cover the fact that there are double standards of law for blacks and whites; |
| 6.2.3 | *Banks* | They are centers of financial and economic power;<br>They are the places where the cotton money goes;<br>They are the most powerful private enterprises;<br>Like stores, they likewise exploit sharecroppers; |
| 6.2.4 | *Barbershops* | Places for [male] gossip and racial hatred;<br>Racially segregated places; |
| 6.2.5 | *Churches* | Places for worship and communality;<br>Even churches are racially segregated places;<br>White man's churches tolerate slavery and racism; |
| 6.2.6 | *Brothels* | For female characters: a prison-like edifice;<br>For male characters: sex and entertainment;<br>Racially segregated places; |
| 6.2.7 | *Public Sculptures* | Symbolic of the past in the present;<br>Glorification of the past; |
| **6.3** | **House related Imagery** | - Symbolic of social inclusion / exclusion -<br>- Defines the relationships of a character with his or her mediate and immediate social environment - |
| 6.3.1 | *Attics* | Storage rooms and refuges for alienated character [mostly males] who are in conflict with society;<br>Attics stress the vertical dimension of a house;<br>Attics are 'upper-class' shacks for social pariahs; |
| 6.3.2 | *Doors* | Doors can be open, closed, locked, unlocked;<br>Sometimes doors are barred by another character;<br>If barred, doors will be insurmountable barriers;<br>If doors are barred by males, these characters try to prevent other males from getting into the house;<br>If doors are barred by females, these characters try to keep other female characters from experiencing either a truth or sexual adventures; |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | Door imagery is thus instrumental in rendering a character's social exclusion or inclusion;<br>Doors can represent the female sexual organ;<br>Doors are connected with the world of sounds;<br>Doors are important in the initiation of a character;<br>Doors can be monitoring devices used to control characters who want to breach the house's order;<br>Door imagery can control the flow of the narration [delaying of key events crucial for the story];<br>Door imagery is chiefly linked to white characters; |
| 6.3.3 | *Windows* | Serve to render a character's isolation, separation, confinement, or alienation from society;<br>Offer an escape from an oppressive parental home;<br>Serve as a frame in which a character can be both a seeing subject as well as an object to be seen;<br>If used as a frame, windows will capture a character in a moment of crisis or reverie;<br>If barred, windows are also chief images of a character's social exclusion or inclusion;<br>Some characters monitor the streets from behind their windows;<br>Windows are mostly linked to white characters; |
| 6.3.4 | *Porches* | Porches are set between private and public spaces, thus they often serve as metaphors of liminality;<br>Porches are places for courtship and storytelling;<br>Porches are an important part of Southern identity;<br>Porches are upper class status symbols;<br>They are places for social life and interaction between the different classes, sexes, and races;<br>They are frequently the locus of male gossip;<br>They are also places for families in crisis;<br>They expose a character to an ever monitoring community; |
| 6.3.5 | *Fences* | Fences are boundaries separating private properties from neighboring properties or public areas;<br>Fences highlight a character's exclusion or disassociation from society;<br>Fences symbolize the cognitive restrictions of some characters [Benjamin Compson, Georgie];<br>Fences are mostly associated with male characters;<br>Fences stress the horizontal dimension of a house; |

This table makes apparent that the issues class and race are principally connected with certain house types, whereas house related imagery is employed to define the relationships of the main characters with either themselves or with their mediate or immediate social environments. The first category, a mediate social environment, refers to a character's closest social milieu [family, relatives, and friends], whereas the second category denotes this character's society as a whole.

Furthermore, the relationships between the different sexes in Faulkner are also most clearly rendered by the use of house related imagery. In this respect, windows and doors are important symbolic features to render female entrapment, while attics and fences, by contrast, are symbolic of male exclusion from society. Moreover, Faulkner's houses are highly gendered spaces in which usually the rule of the male head of the family [or of an authoritarian woman with male attributes] is operative. This sense of patriarchal structure is especially apparent in the stories "Dry September", "A Rose for Emily", "Elly", "Miss Zilphia Gant", "Lo!", "Mountain Victory", "A Justice", and, of course, in the novel *Absalom, Absalom!*.

4. House related imagery like doors, windows, porches, and fences are not only used as spatial metaphors of liminality; these elementary co-occurrences also have a prominent position within the complex symbol system of the house motif.

While earlier studies of the house motif in Faulkner either focus on similarities between Lafayette County and Yoknapatawpha County [Kerr, Miner, Dain, Brown, and Hines] or deal with the image of the house as a means to delineate character [Watson, Ruzicka, Gutting, and Berger], this dissertation – based on a joint qualitative and quantitative approach – makes clear that the house motif is also instrumental in conveying the segregated society of Yoknapatawpha County where double standards of law, morality, and code of conduct abound. In the previously published studies by the authors quoted above, almost no light at all is shed on the role of houses in the contexts of class, race, and gender [except for Berger's study] and thus upon the social reality of Faulkner's fictional county.

In addition to that, this dissertation likewise shows the significance of house related imagery and stresses thus the relevance of spatial boundaries in Faulkner's oeuvre. Although Freywald's study also highlights the significance of space and related spatial imagery like windows and doors, her study is solely focused on the short story collection *The Collected Stories*. This dissertation, by contrast, examines the relevance of elementary co-occurrences in all of Faulkner's novels and short story collections and offers thus the first comprehensive analysis of this subject matter in the canon of Faulkner criticism.

Furthermore, this dissertation is the first analysis of Faulkner's fictitious built structures that is based on Lévi-Strauss' theory of a house-based society.

The concept of the Grounded-Theory proved to be the perfect method for my dissertation. Due to the dynamic nature of this method, I was constantly able to verify or to discard a certain thesis on the basis of my observable data [see also appendix].

In bringing this dissertation to a close, one particular use of house imagery will be set in focus, once again. One of the most powerful metaphors Faulkner ever presented in his fiction is that of a Northerner's dead body hidden in a room in the decaying house of an 'aristocratic' Southern lady in "A Rose for Emily". When the villagers violently open the door to this room, Faulkner omits any descriptions revealing whether these men were really shocked about their bizarre discovery or not. This observation raises the question whether the villagers knew about Homer Barron's dead body being there all the while. And if the answer is yes, which further implications does this observation bear?

In my view, the image of a murdered Northerner kept in a secret tomb in a Southerner's house is reminiscent of Lincoln's dictum "a house divided against itself cannot stand" (1989, p.426). Although Lincoln's house, of course, was the Union and the source of its division the institution of slavery (Hogan 1997, p.167), this citation is likewise a fitting metaphor for Faulkner's fictional world in general and for Miss Emily's house in particular. Whereas the upper region of the Grierson house became the burial ground of Mr. Barron, his murderess remained in the downstairs floor of her house for good. It is thus particularly this vertical division of Miss Emily's house which makes the Grierson home become a symbolic house divided. It is symbolic of the conflicts resulting from the passing of the Old South and the advent of the New South.

Furthermore, the decay that has seized Miss Emily's house is at the same time also a metaphor for the vanishing of a generation which has most fiercely opposed the symbolic order of the New South. In the light of this, Miss Emily's house was indicative of the glory of the Old South at the end of the 19th century, but after Miss Emily's death at the turn of the 20th century, her house is supposed to lose any symbolic significance at all. One can only guess that it will collapse someday and be replaced by pieces of modern architecture [or by cotton gins and garages] – thereby eradicating all traces of this last monument to the Old South.

Apart from any critical interpretations of the various metaphorical qualities of Miss Emily's house, however, this decaying edifice is without any doubt a most significant contribution to the use of fictitious houses in American literature per se. The Grierson house harbors that certain kind of quality, which is necessary to make it an ever-appealing vantage point for the new and inexperienced reader to discover the fictional world of Mr. William Faulkner – as happened to me.

Yet with regard to the query raised in the introduction, whether the house motif is the central category in Faulkner or not, the answer to that question is still hard to find. On the one hand, it has become clear that the house motif is of outstanding importance for an understanding of the Yoknapatawpha saga as a whole [especially for a comprehension of its social structure], as this dissertation has attempted to demonstrate. But, on the other hand, one has to be aware of the fact that Faulkner's writings are an extremely many-layered phenomenon. This fact thus challenges the notion whether there is a single most important literary motif in Faulkner's writings at all. Be that as it may, one should not forget the fact that the semantic group 'house' still contains those words that most frequently occur throughout all of Faulkner's stories and novels – as my study of the concordances to his works has brought to light. This, in turn, once again highlights the significance of this particular literary motif in his oeuvre.

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- Novel # 1 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *The Sound and the Fury.*

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mother (299) | Thing (71) | Nigger (52) | God (40) | Box (31) |
| Time (240) | Bed (70) | Table (52) | Honeysuckle (39) | Lot (31) |
| Father (213) | Boy (70) | Dark (16/50) | Mother´s (39) | Paper (31) |
| Door (196) | Name (70) | Dress (50) | Years (39) | Barn (30) |
| Hand (183) | Dollars (69) | Road (50) | Quarter (38) | Hour (30) |
| Man (172) | Girl (69) | School (50) | Sir (38) | Jesus (30) |
| House (142) | Business (68) | Rain (49) | Work (38) | Wish (1/30) |
| Face (122) | Watch (66) | Shadow (49) | Air (37) | Clothes (29) |
| Head (118) | Uncle (65) | Feet (48) | Bank (37) | Somebody (29) |
| Water (114) | People (64) | Hill (48) | Drive (10/37) | Glass (28) |
| Way (114) | Hell (63) | Miss (47) | Harvard (37) | Kind (28) |
| Hands (105) | Minute (63) | Tonight (47) | Kin (2/37) | Nobody (28) |
| Car (99) | Trees (63) | Wall (45) | Women (37) | Pocket (28) |
| Eyes (96) | Folks (62) | Tree (44) | Letter (36) | Arms (28) |
| Town (91) | Mouth (62) | Bottle (43) | Grass (35) | Fellow (27) |
| Day (90) | Woman (62) | Hat (43) | Today (35) | Hair (27) |
| Money (90) | Blood (61) | Steps (43) | Corner (34) | Job (27) |
| Home (87) | Street (61) | Arm (42) | Front (34) | Morning (27) |
| Room (86) | Cold (60) | Dead (42) | Branch (33) | Piece (27) |
| Show (61/81) | Fence (58) | Gate (42) | Chair (33) | Sight (27) |
| Kitchen (80) | Night (57) | Sister (42) | Clock (33) | Young (27) |
| Fire (79) | Things (55) | Sleep (42) | Eye (33) | Afternoon (26) |
| Stairs (77) | Place (54) | Mammy (41) | Year (33) | Roof (26) |
| Light (72) | Sound (54) | Play (41) | Niggers (32) | Shadows (26) |
| Window (72) | Voice (54) | Supper (41) | Sun (32) | Square (26) |

(Polk, N., Privratsky, K. 1980, pp.767, 768).

- Novel # 2 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *As I Lay Dying*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pa (202) | Day (40) | Word (28) | Mule (22) | Wood (18) |
| Wagon (135) | Leg (38) | Box (27) | Path (22) | Body (17) |
| Horse (134) | Ma (38) | Dollars (27) | Top (22) | Boys (17) |
| Man (130) | Bridge (37) | Home (27) | Words (22) | Cakes (17) |
| Time (120) | Dark (17/37) | Land (27) | Jefferson (21) | Country (17) |
| Face (115) | Lord (37) | Side (27) | Knees (21) | Dust (17) |
| Water (107) | Mules (37) | Sleep (14/27) | Things (21) | Eye (17) |
| House (98) | Watch (37) | Brother (26) | Front (20) | Hair (17) |
| Head (86) | Fellow (36) | Light (26) | Lot (13/20) | Lantern (17) |
| Eyes (85) | Rope (36) | Supper (26) | Porch (20) | People (17) |
| Saw (35/81) | Earth (35) | Bank (25) | Rest (11/20) | Shape (17) |
| Way (67) | Mind (23/35) | Thing (25) | River (20) | Sky (17) |
| Barn (62) | Night (33) | Work (15/25) | Trees (20) | Spring (17) |
| Hand (56) | Life (32) | Blood (24) | Walk (1/20) | Square (17) |
| Kind (55/56) | Money (32) | Mother (24) | Cow (19) | Sweat (17) |
| Road (53) | Mouth (32) | Foot (23) | Doctor (19) | Tomorrow (17) |
| Folks (52) | Woman (32) | Girl (23) | Ford (19) | Coffin (16) |
| Rain (51) | Feet (31) | Hope (16/23) | Minute (19) | Instant (17) |
| Team (51) | Ground (31) | Love (20/23) | World (19) | Jackson (16) |
| Door (50) | Sin (31) | Morning (23) | Years (19) | Log (16) |
| Dead (4/49) | End (28/29) | Move (1/23) | Days (18) | Package (16) |
| Hands (46) | Fish (29) | Window (23) | Fire (18) | Piece (16) |
| Bed (44) | Hill (29) | Air (22) | Hell (18) | Room (16) |
| Town (44) | Sight (28) | Heart (22) | Place (18) | Shirt (16) |
| Boy (43) | Sound (28) | Legs (22) | Voice (18) | Balance (15) |

(Capps, J.L. 1977, pp.414,415).

- Novel # 3 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *Sanctuary*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Door (291) | Home (68) | Folks (40) | Half (31) | Talk (4/26) |
| Man (251) | Feet (67) | Girl (40) | Jail (31) | Cot (25) |
| Woman (251) | Sound (66) | Glass (39) | Name (31) | District (25) |
| Hand (218) | Corner (65) | Kind (38) | Square (31) | Father (25) |
| Miss (216) | Day (65) | Money (38) | Stop (1/31) | Honey (25) |
| House (201) | Cigarette (63) | Shadow (38) | Air (30) | Minute (25) |
| Face (182) | Men (61) | Shoulder (38) | God (30) | Music (25) |
| Room (154) | Wall (61) | Stairs (38) | Box (29) | Neck (25) |
| Head (135) | Porch (58) | Hotel (37) | Dead (1/29) | Proprietor (25) |
| Time (127) | Chair (57) | Memphis (37) | Front (29) | Thing (25) |
| Bed (126) | Hall (56) | Dark (36) | School (29) | Breast (24) |
| Car (124) | People (56) | Place (36) | Jefferson (28) | Lap (24) |
| Still (2/121) | Street (54) | Kitchen (35) | Walk (6/28) | May (9/24) |
| Eyes (101) | Window (54) | Dress (34) | Case (27) | Mind (11/24) |
| Child (99) | Boy (51) | Inside (34) | Darkness (27) | Movement (24) |
| Hands (87) | Floor (50) | Spring (34) | Dogs (27) | Past (24) |
| Table (87) | Lawyer (49) | Women (34) | Dollars (27) | Stove (24) |
| Town (85) | Drink (21/47) | Arms (33) | Fingers (27) | Attorney (23) |
| Voice (83) | Hair (47) | Judge (33) | Legs (27) | Boys (23) |
| Light (82) | Side (46) | Negro (33) | Voices (27) | Days (23) |
| Night (82) | Morning (45) | Pocket (33) | Watch (15/27) | Fire (23) |
| Hat (79) | Train (45) | Suit (33) | Barn (26) | Fool (23) |
| Coat (75) | Years (44) | Body (32) | Bottle (26) | Sister (23) |
| Way (72) | Road (43) | Business (32) | Match (26) | Tankard (23) |
| Mouth (69) | Arm (42) | Moment (32) | Supper (26) | Top (23) |

(Polk, N., Hart, J.D. 1990, pp.611,612).

- Novel # 4 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *Light in August*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man (524) | God (114) | Work (67) | Reason (51) | Business (41) |
| Time (410) | Street (114) | Mouth (65) | Shoes (51) | Dogs (41) |
| Face (376) | Bed (110) | Saturday (65) | Word (51) | Smoke (41) |
| House (309) | Cabin (108) | Thing (65) | Past (50) | Children (40) |
| Woman (266) | Jefferson (108) | Chair (65) | Son (50) | Days (40) |
| Christmas (255) | Home (105) | Body (63) | Air (49) | Minister (39) |
| Door (237) | Window (104) | Side (63) | Jail (49) | Shape (39) |
| Voice (218) | People (102) | Sleep (63) | Horse 48) | Call (38) |
| Town (214) | Life (101) | Sunday (63) | Words (47) | Hair (38) |
| Night (205) | Boy (97) | Watch (20/68) | Stranger (46) | Shadow (38) |
| Men (200) | Name (95) | Earth (59) | Train (46) | Trees 838) |
| Years (180) | Church (94) | Women (59) | Voices (46) | Wall (38) |
| Day (171) | Light (93) | Kitchen (58) | Miles (45) | World (38) |
| Eyes (142) | Wagon (86) | Mill (58) | Evening (44) | Hat (37) |
| Child (137) | Sound (83) | Square (55) | Hour (44) | Husband (37) |
| Folks (135) | Car (80) | Deputy (54) | Lamp (44) | Pistol (37) |
| Dark (33/134) | Fire (80) | Mind (54) | Spoke (44) | Afternoon (36) |
| Hands (132) | Dead (78) | Cot (53) | Week (44) | Baby (36) |
| Sheriff (130) | Father (76) | Doctor (53) | Memphis (43) | Clothes (36) |
| Way (126) | Feet (74) | Food (53) | Shirt (43) | Corner (36) |
| Negro (125) | Place (73) | Money (53) | Watches (43) | Desk (36) |
| Nigger (119) | Morning (72) | Country (52) | Front (42) | Darkness (35) |
| Road (117) | Doc (68) | Moment (52) | Sight (42) | Expression (35) |
| Room (117) | Wife (68) | Blood (51) | Single (42) | Fact (35) |
| Head (115) | Fellow (67) | Faces (51) | Table (42) | Floor (35) |

(Capps, J. 1979, pp.1049, 1050).

- Novel # 5 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *Pylon*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reporter (465) | Name (58) | Car (41) | Morning (30) | Weight (25) |
| Time (158) | Moment (56) | Field (41) | Walk (3/30) | Bucks (24) |
| Man (143) | Move (4/56) | Day (39) | Hat (29) | Hour (24) |
| Hand (129) | Town (54) | Dollars (39) | Land (29) | Child (23) |
| Money (112) | Airport (52) | Hell (39) | Minutes (29) | City (23) |
| Jumper (100) | Drink (37/52) | Jug (39) | Wall (29) | Guys (23) |
| Door (96) | Pocket (52) | Kid (39) | Bus (28) | Instant (23) |
| Light (95) | Floor (51) | Afternoon (38) | Driver (28) | Note (23) |
| Boy (91) | Hands (49) | Water (38) | Engine (28) | Sandwich (23) |
| Guy (91) | Aeroplane (48) | Boots (38) | Ground (28) | Speed (23) |
| Jesus (83) | Pay (4/48) | Dark (6/38) | Coat (27) | Faces (22) |
| Woman (81) | Race (44/48) | Side (37) | Matter (27) | Motion (22) |
| Second (79) | Way (48) | Tonight (37) | Minute (27) | Sack (22) |
| Night (75) | Desk (47) | Place (36) | Photographer (27) | Bastard (21) |
| Street (75) | Head (47) | Lake (33) | Body (26) | Chance (21) |
| Parachute (74) | Hangar (46) | Shirt (33) | Corner (26) | Pass (1/21) |
| Home (73) | Window (46) | Kind (32) | Yesterday (26) | Sign (21) |
| Paper (72) | Glass (45) | Reporter´s (32) | Aeroplanes (25) | Sun (21) |
| Voice (68) | Sound (45) | Cigarette (31) | Eye (25) | Today (21) |
| Room (67) | Watch (17/45) | Editor (31) | Hotel (25) | Arm (20) |
| Ship (67) | Feet (43) | People (31) | Hours (25) | Folks (20) |
| Table (65) | Men (43) | Pylon (31) | Lights (25) | House (20) |
| Bed (62) | Dead (1/42) | Coffee (30) | Pair (25) | Office (20) |
| Air (61) | Mouth (42) | Inside (30) | Shoes (25) | Rest (16/20) |
| Tomorrow (61) | Apron (41) | Legs (30) | Shoulder (25) | Rotundra (20) |

(Polk, N., Hart, J.D. 1989, pp.658,659).

- Novel # 6 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *Absalom, Absalom!*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Time (360) | Name (81) | Afternoon (58) | Negroes (47) | Church (38) |
| Years (329) | Life (80) | Demon (58) | Marriage (45) | Clothes (38) |
| Man (305) | Fact (78) | Wife (57) | Mind (27/45) | Horses (38) |
| House (272) | Room (77) | Negro (56) | Youth (45) | Return (9/38) |
| Father (268) | Son (77) | Place (56) | Christmas (44) | Table (38) |
| Grandfather (219) | Voice (77) | Summer (56) | May (2/44) | Part (37) |
| Face (203) | Children (75) | Money (55) | Faces (43) | Peace (37) |
| Men (157) | Niggers (75) | Land (55) | Word (43) | Carriage (36) |
| Day (151) | Nigger (75) | Second (53) | Head (42) | Father´s (36) |
| Miss (147) | Moment (73) | Food (52) | Hope (30/42) | Side (36) |
| Hand (134) | Lawyer (71) | Miles (52) | Horse (42) | Architect (35) |
| Woman (123) | Air (70) | Wedding (52) | Months (42) | Arm (34) |
| Child (116) | Daughter (69) | Kind (51) | Store (42) | Law (34) |
| Hundred (110) | Well (3/68) | Days (50) | World (42) | (New) Orleans (34) |
| Love (84/107) | Boy (67) | Earth (50) | Country (42) | Age (33) |
| Night (107) | Eyes (67) | Jefferson (50) | Fire (41) | Point (33) |
| Town (107) | Sister (67) | Cold (6/49) | War (41) | School (33) |
| Aunt (102) | Bed (64) | Family (48) | Answer (12/40) | Times (33) |
| Door (102) | Body (64) | God (48) | Course (40) | Dogs (32) |
| Home (96) | Flesh (64) | Hands (48) | Secret (40) | Past (8/32) |
| Mother (93) | People (64) | Matter (48) | Words (40) | Sun (32) |
| Blood (90) | Dark (24/62) | Pride (48) | Feet (40) | Wagon (32) |
| Dead (3/90) | Way (62) | Window (48) | Instant (39) | Company (31) |
| Women (85) | Black (4/61) | Girl (47) | Move (2/39) | County (31) |
| Light (81) | Year (60) | Mississippi (47) | Brother (38) | Sister´s (31 |

(Polk, N., Hart, J.D. 1989, pp.984,985).

- Novel # 7 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *The Unvanquished*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Father (267) | Cabin (50) | Dark (24/35) | General (26) | Musket (22) |
| Time (195) | Niggers (50) | Name (35) | Inside (26) | Paper (22) |
| Men (131) | Colonel (49) | Watch (3/35) | Sleep (4/26) | Shot (4/22) |
| Wagon (127) | Hands (49) | Hill (34) | Smell (10/26) | Sight (22) |
| Hand (126) | Women (48) | Kind (34) | Water (26) | Trunk (22) |
| House (122) | Side (47) | Lieutenant (34) | Coat (25) | Beard (21) |
| Uncle (116) | Bed (45) | Memphis (34) | Drive (15/25) | Country (21) |
| Man (109) | Children (44) | Arm (33) | Ground (25) | Silver (21) |
| Mules (107) | Ride (1/44) | Chair (32) | Officer (25) | Summer (21) |
| Road (99) | Yankee (44) | Fire (32) | Pasture (25) | Clothes (20) |
| Eyes (93) | Sound (43) | People (32) | War (25) | Faces (20) |
| Aunt (90) | Woman (43) | Dust (30) | Marse (24) | Kitchen (20) |
| Home (85) | Years (43) | Rain (30) | Word (24) | Stairs (20) |
| Horse (83) | Light (42) | Regiment (32) | Dress (24) | Steps (20) |
| Face (80) | Room (41) | Dead (0/29) | Folks (23) | Troop (20) |
| Horses (75) | Way (39) | Mule (29) | Sun (23) | Window (20) |
| Night (74) | Cousin (38) | Town (29) | Thing (23) | Fence (19) |
| Head (73) | Feet (38) | Voice (29) | Tomorrow (23) | Gate (19) |
| Door (71) | Hair (38) | Afternoon (28) | Trees (23) | Miles (19) |
| Day (67) | Mouth (38) | Morning (28) | Bottom (22) | Place (19) |
| Pistol (63) | Boys (37) | River (28) | Boy (22) | Smoke (19) |
| Yankees (61) | God (37) | Arms (28) | End (22) | Supper (19) |
| Hat (56) | Jefferson (36) | Nigger (27) | Front (22) | Tennessee (19) |
| Father´s (55) | Move (3/36) | Pen (27) | Hall (22) | Box (18) |
| Well (1/53) | Stick (33/36) | Railroad (27) | Money (22) | Cavalry (18) |

(Polk, N., Hart, J.D. 1990, pp.495,496).

- Novel # 8 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *The Wild Palms*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Time (282) | Feet (63) | Women (41) | Line (30) | Bench (25) |
| Man (253) | Bed (60) | Bag (39) | Rose (1/30) | Box (25) |
| Can (17/193) | Light (58) | Dark (13/39) | Snow (30) | Cab (25) |
| Convict (191) | Room (57) | Levee (39) | Trees (30) | Cajun (25) |
| Woman (155) | Train (57) | River (39) | End (29) | Call (2/25) |
| Water (149) | Love (40/53) | God (38) | Mouth (29) | Cigarette (25) |
| Doctor (146) | Wife (52) | Work (21/38) | Return (29) | Course (25) |
| Face (143) | Paper (51) | Dead (0/37) | Wall (29) | Faces (25) |
| Hand (130) | Paddle (50) | Half (37) | Watch (0/29) | Hospital (25) |
| Skiff (127) | People (50) | Kind (37) | Coffee (28) | Judge (25) |
| Door (113) | Sound (50) | Morning (36) | Beat (2/27) | Place (25) |
| Day (89) | Way (49) | Name (36) | Earth (27) | Speed (25) |
| Head (87) | Wind (47) | Table (36) | Home (27) | Mind (10/24) |
| Years (87) | Hands (45) | Black (Wind) (0/35) | Hope (19/27) | Reason (24) |
| Eyes (84) | Life (45) | Car (35) | Job (27) | Store (24) |
| Money (83) | Air (44) | Drink (15/35) | Town (27) | Truck (24) |
| Night (81) | Second (44) | Hair (35) | Weeks (27) | Evening (23) |
| Boat (78) | Warden (44) | Hell (33) | Weight (27) | Floor (23) |
| Voice (75) | Move (4/43) | Orleans (33) | Blood (26) | Gun (23) |
| Days (70) | Food (42) | Side (33) | Matter (26) | Pistol (23) |
| House (70) | Instant (42) | Window (33) | Outside (26) | Rat (23) |
| Moment (67) | Officer (42) | Sun (32) | Rain (26) | Afternoon (22) |
| Cold (19/66) | Smell (26/42) | Coat (31) | Stove (26) | Cabin (22) |
| Men (65) | Body (41) | Fire (31) | Year (26) | Chicago (22) |
| Dollars (64) | Children (41) | Iron (5/30) | Answer (11/25) | Convicts (22) |

(Privratsky,K.L. 1983, pp.742,743).

- Novel # 9-
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *The Hamlet*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man (343) | Feet (98) | Dark (29/65) | Watch (4/55) | God (39) |
| Time (342) | Year (98) | Earth (65) | Hell (54) | Ground (39) |
| Horse (318) | Texan (95) | Light (64) | Overalls (54) | Life (39) |
| Face (228) | Dollars (88) | Instant (63) | Work (28/54) | People (39) |
| House (209) | Gate (88) | Steps (63) | End (53) | Week (39) |
| Hand (170) | Moment (86) | Cow (62) | Negro (53) | Chair (38) |
| Store (170) | Room (86) | Bed (61) | Past (52) | Note (38) |
| Wagon (167) | School (85) | Children (60) | Summer (52) | Shoulder (38) |
| Head (141) | Sound (84) | Dog (60) | Village (52) | Table (38) |
| Door (136) | Clerk (80) | Miles (60) | Shoes (50) | Yard (38) |
| Men (135) | Horses (80) | Woman (60) | Father (49) | Boys (37) |
| Home (134) | Fire (74) | Country (59) | Walk (4/49) | Breath (37) |
| Eyes (133) | Team (72) | Cousin (59) | Fellow (48) | Brother (37) |
| Road (133) | Body (71) | Dust (59) | Front (48) | Field (37) |
| Night (132) | Wife (71) | Move (59) | Half (48) | Nigger (37) |
| Day (131) | Afternoon (69) | Water (59) | Side (48) | Teeth (37) |
| Well (5/129) | Folks (69) | Mules (57) | Faces (47) | Axe (36) |
| Years (127) | Gallery (69) | Pocket (57) | Jefferson (46) | Corn (36) |
| Fence (124) | Name (69) | Buckboard (56) | Buggy (45) | Husband (36) |
| Money (114) | Second (69) | Foot (56) | Texas (45) | Kind (36) |
| Lot (112) | Way (68) | Mouth (56) | Tree (43) | Lane (36) |
| Morning (110) | Days (67) | Mule (56) | Land (41) | Mind (19/36) |
| Voice (108) | Place (66) | Shirt (56) | Months (41) | Paper (36) |
| Boy (107) | Barn (65) | Sun (56) | Box (40) | Prince (36) |
| Hands (100) | Cold (6/65) | Rope (55) | Justice (40) | Shovel (36) |

(Polk, N., Hart, J.D. 1990, pp.1053,1054).

- Novel # 10 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *Go Down, Moses*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man (350) | Voice (83) | Half (56) | Miss (41) | Country (33) |
| Still (22/343) | Money (81) | Moment (55) | Sleep (11/41) | Father´s (3/32) |
| Time (338) | Light (79) | Name (55) | Walk (3/41) | Hat (32) |
| Uncle (305) | Bed (78) | Man´s (54) | Cotton (39) | Mare (32) |
| Boy (214) | Lion (76) | Miles (54) | Town (39) | Mind (11/32) |
| Years (178) | Camp (74) | Dead (3/51) | Foot (38) | Mother (32) |
| Hand (176) | Gun (73) | Son (51) | Hounds (38) | Mules (32) |
| House (176) | Dark (27/71) | Kitchen (50) | Instant (38) | Negroes (32) |
| Face (147) | Dog (71) | Life (50) | Tomorrow (38) | Paper (32) |
| Night (131) | Year (71) | Sound (50) | Shot (7/37) | Thing (32) |
| Men (123) | Well (69) | Way (49) | Bottom (36) | Train (32) |
| Day (113) | Feet (67) | People (49) | Jefferson (36) | Watch (32) |
| Father (102) | Hundred (67) | Cousin (47) | Side (36) | Creek (31) |
| Home (100) | Woman (64) | Wilderness (47) | Bank (35) | Days (31) |
| Land (100) | Dollars (63) | Front (46) | Deer (35) | Help (6/31) |
| Blood (99) | Place (63) | God (46) | Fire (35) | Log (31) |
| Eyes (98) | Wagon (63) | Salesman (46) | Machine (35) | Afternon (30) |
| Room (98) | Negro (61) | Table (46) | Supper (35) | Fyce (30) |
| Dogs (97) | Nigger (61) | Ben (45) | Hope (20/34) | Boy´s (30) |
| Door (97) | Hands (60) | Car (45) | Weeks (34) | Chance (30) |
| Morning (95) | Water (60) | Grandfather (45) | Food (33) | Ground (30) |
| Head (94) | Wife (60) | Sir (44) | Hunt (8/33) | Horses (30) |
| Bear (92) | Fathers (8/58) | Air (43) | Matter (33) | Pistol (30) |
| Woods (91) | Child (57) | Chair (41) | Tree (33) | Rain (30) |
| Mule (89) | Earth (57) | Horse (41) | Week (33) | Second (30) |

(Capps, J. 1977, pp.840-842).

- Novel # 11 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *Intruder in the Dust*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Time (260) | Way (59) | Sound (39) | Pick (18/29) | Bank (23) |
| Man (250) | Morning (57) | Eyes (38) | Chair (28) | Daylight (23) |
| Still (5/222) | Pistol (57) | Tomorrow (38) | Child (28) | Dirt (23) |
| Sheriff (160) | Mother (54) | Walk (12/37) | Negroes (28) | Edge (23) |
| Miss (130) | Jail (53) | Father (36) | Uncle´s (28) | Inside (23) |
| Town (109) | Grave (50) | Hope (24/36) | Money (27) | Land (23) |
| Night (106) | Day (48) | Hours (36) | Move (2/27) | Part (23) |
| Door (96) | Course (47) | Matter (35) | Store (27) | School (23) |
| Car (93) | Hat (46) | Room (35) | Thing (27) | Top (23) |
| Hand (81) | Horse (46) | Sheriff´s (35) | Cars (26) | Well (1/23) |
| Face (76) | Head (44) | Mule (33) | Country (26) | Gallery (22) |
| Front (75) | Sleep (26/44) | Past (4/33) | Light (26) | Hall (22) |
| House (75) | Boy (43) | Children (32) | Name (26) | Kind (22) |
| Voice (75) | Saturday (43) | Feet (32) | Shame (26) | Man´s (22) |
| Square (73) | Life (42) | Minutes (32) | Shirt (26) | Mile (22) |
| Truck (70) | Miles (42) | Office (32) | Window (26) | Motion (22) |
| Men (69) | Nigger (42) | Water (32) | Woman (26) | Place (22) |
| Home (67) | Fact (41) | Body (31) | Bed (25) | Times (22) |
| Moment (66) | Half (41) | Gate (31) | Boys (25) | Bridge (21) |
| People (66) | Road (41) | Side (31) | Jailer (25) | Business (21) |
| Second (66) | Afternoon (40) | Tonight (31) | Church 824) | Cold (3/21) |
| County (64) | Negro (40) | Dead (1/30) | Earth (24) | May (9/21) |
| Street (64) | Sunday (40) | Shovel (30) | Faces (24) | Mind (12/21) |
| Dark (30/61) | Table (40) | Year (30) | Hill (24) | Murderer (21) |
| Years (61) | Hands (39) | Folks (29) | Women (24) | Shot (21) |

(Polk, N. 1983, pp.599,600).

- Novel # 12 -

A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *Requiem for a Nun*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Time (186) | Name (41) | Miles (30) | Head (23) | Work (9/20) |
| Years (128) | Table (40) | Mule (30) | Lights (23) | Baby (19) |
| Man (121) | Letters (39) | Reason (30) | Second (23) | Bear (9/19) |
| Governor (117) | Year (39) | City (29) | Wagon (23) | Girl (19) |
| Door (105) | People (38) | Act (28) | Bag (22) | Iron (4/19 |
| Town (97) | God (37) | Home (28) | Brick (22) | Log (19) |
| Men (87) | Way (36) | Lighter (28) | Car (22) | Memphis (19) |
| Lock (74) | Children (35) | Tray (28) | Country (22) | Rear (9/19) |
| Jail (73) | Tomorrow (35) | Chair (27) | Eyes (22) | Son (19) |
| Room (68) | Desk (33) | Voice (27) | Fact (22) | Sound (19) |
| Money (65) | Dollars (33) | Light (26) | Horse (22) | Standing (19) |
| Hand (64) | Land (33) | May (4/26) | Order (7/22) | Street (19) |
| Day (62) | Matter (33) | Air (25) | Rest (13/22) | Wall (19) |
| Jefferson (62) | South (33) | Drink (20/25) | Women (22) | Wife (19) |
| Moment (56) | States (33) | Stage (25) | Coat (21) | Bottle (18) |
| Night (56) | Glass (33) | State (25) | Court (21) | Murder (18) |
| County (55) | Scene (32) | Thing (25) | Part (21) | Slaves (18) |
| Face (52) | Hands (31) | Uncle (25) | Store (21) | Square (18) |
| Child (49) | Husband (31) | Yoknapatawpha (25) | Days (20) | Summer (18) |
| Course (49) | Lawyer (31) | Father (24) | Fire (20) | Train (18) |
| Settlement (47) | Mississippi (31) | Hat (24) | Government (20) | Virginia (18) |
| House (45) | Nigger (31) | Life (24) | Kind (20) | Bandits (18) |
| Courthouse (44) | Wilderness (31) | Months (24) | Negro (20) | Doctor (18) |
| Cigarette (41) | Dead (1/30) | Past (14/24) | Truth (20) | Hour (18) |
| Morning (41) | Jailor (30) | Earth (23) | Whore (20) | Law (18) |

(Polk, N., Hart, J.D. 1979, pp.516-518).

- Novel # 13 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *A Fable*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man (504) | Room (117) | Sergeant-Major (79) | Hours (63) | Coat (48) |
| Time (444) | City (114) | Girl (78) | World (63) | Days (48) |
| General (325) | Course (114) | End (77) | Order (30/62) | Instant (48) |
| Years (252) | Regiment (111) | Money (77) | Table (60) | Motion (48) |
| Corporal (228) | German (16/102) | Name (77) | Staff (59) | Pass (6/48) |
| Face (226) | Morning (102) | Colonel (75) | Lorry (58) | Priest (48) |
| Men (224) | Way (101) | Tomorrow (75) | Year (58) | Son (48) |
| Commander (215) | France (100) | Wall (74) | Line (57) | Well (3/48) |
| Sergeant (215) | Car (98) | Group (73) | Pistol (57) | Cart (47) |
| Hand (211) | Head (98) | Matter (73) | Side (57) | Children (47) |
| Door (194) | Paris (97) | Move (7/73) | Body (56) | Afternoon (46) |
| French (2/194) | Second (96) | Man´s (71) | Wire (56) | Months (46) |
| Moment (187) | People (94) | Corps (70) | Battalion (55) | Call (45) |
| Day (166) | Place (93) | Lawyer (70) | Office (54) | Glory (45) |
| Voice (164) | Life (91) | Dead (1/69) | Gate (53) | Thing (45) |
| Division (163) | Earth (88) | Sister (69) | Officer (53) | Watch (23/45) |
| Runner (162) | Child (85) | Crowd (65) | Sort (53) | Husband (44) |
| Major (156) | Hands (85) | Light (65) | Yesterday (53) | Outside (44) |
| Horse (152) | Sound (85) | Sir (65) | Women (52) | Sentry (44) |
| War (144) | Inside (84) | Rest (50/64) | Dark (23/51) | Fear (43) |
| Woman (138) | Aide (82) | Air (63) | House (50) | Soldiers (43) |
| Night (128) | Faces (82) | Army (63) | Bread (49) | Youth (43) |
| Negro (127) | Half (82) | British (63) | Captain (49) | Private (42) |
| American (20/117) | Home (81) | Eyes (63) | Feet (49) | Soldier (42) |
| Front (117) | Fact (79) | Hope (48/63) | Past (18/49) | Window (42) |

(Polk, N., Privratsky, K.L. 1981, pp.1238,1239).

- Novel # 14 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *The Town*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Uncle (657) | County (85) | Moment (64) | Chance (48) | Show (18/38) |
| Time (516) | Kind (85) | Business (62) | Window (48) | Boys (37) |
| Jefferson (331) | Dollars (84) | Car (61) | Mississippi (47) | Cut-out (37) |
| Mother (255) | Store (83) | Inside (61) | Things (47) | Desk (37) |
| Bank (203) | Thing (81) | Miss (61) | Mayor (46) | Fire (37) |
| Money (190) | Half (80) | Cousin (59) | Dollar (46) | Paper (37) |
| Years (186) | Face (79) | Vice (59) | Judge (45) | Table (37) |
| Day (180) | Fact (77) | Square (58) | Watch (4/44) | Talk (4/37) |
| Man (169) | Front (77) | Miz (57) | Cream (43) | Trouble (37) |
| Father (168) | Boy (74) | Men (56) | City (42) | Week (37) |
| Town (167) | President (72) | Girl (54) | Hat (42) | Bed (36) |
| House (162) | Second (72) | Woman (54) | Side (42) | Minute (36) |
| Home (156) | Afternoon (70) | Brass (53) | Feller (41) | Move (3/36) |
| Night (149) | Name (70) | Child (53) | May (8/41) | Yard (36) |
| Door (137) | Place (70) | Past (4/53) | Snopeses (41) | Blue (8/36) |
| Way (135) | Colonel (69) | Rest (52/53) | Horse (40) | Light (35) |
| School (131) | Life (69) | Mind (32/52) | Stock (40) | Plant (35) |
| Morning (130) | Bend (68) | Folks (51) | Summer (40) | Women (35) |
| People (109) | Frenchman´s (68) | Grandfather (51) | Cleveland (39) | Work (16/35) |
| Course (100) | Matter (67) | Hands (51) | Corner (39) | Stay (1/34) |
| Hand (95) | Dark (22/66) | Top (50) | Hope (24/39) | Ice (33) |
| Year (92) | Room (66) | Word (50) | Mules (39) | Law (33) |
| Lawyer (89) | Street (66) | Eyes (49) | Water (39) | Walk (7/32) |
| Wife (88) | Mule (65) | Husband (49) | Cold (5/38) | Negro (32) |
| Office (86) | Head (64) | Tank (49) | Country (38) | Sound (32) |

(Polk, N., Pizzi, L.Z. 1985, pp.991,992).

- Novel # 15 -

A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *The Mansion*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Time (611) | Folks (111) | Matter (74) | Light (56) | Miles (47) |
| Years (360) | Room (110) | Second (74) | Shot (32/56) | Reason (47) |
| Uncle (331) | Bank (107) | Warden (71) | Head (55) | Ground (47) |
| Man (330) | Rest (99/103) | Well (2/71) | President (55) | Judge (45) |
| Jefferson (251) | Call (7/102) | Boy (70) | Cotton (54) | Love (45) |
| Lawyer (220) | Town (102) | Front (70) | Men (54) | Outside (45) |
| Day (213) | War (93) | Mother (70) | Walk (5/54) | Side (45) |
| Money (204) | Parchman (92) | Hell (69) | Hands (53) | Pocket (44) |
| Home (201) | People (91) | Work (37/69) | Son (53) | Sunday (44) |
| Dollars (180) | Car (90) | School (67) | Fence (52) | Country (43) |
| House (178) | Window (90) | Woman (66) | Beat (10/51) | Months (42) |
| Way (166) | Wife (89) | Eyes (65) | Cents (51) | Feller (42) |
| Night (146) | Face (87) | Feet (65) | Daughter (51) | God (42) |
| Course (143) | Dollar (86) | Mississippi (65) | Hat (50) | Move (3/42) |
| Hand (141) | Bend (83) | Store (64) | Law (50) | Pick (1/42) |
| Moment (137) | Cow (83) | Chair (63) | Safe (1/50) | World (42) |
| County (126) | Days (83) | Father (63) | Street (50) | Yard (42) |
| Morning (126) | Thing (83) | Lot (62) | Week (50) | Family (41) |
| Life (124) | Frenchman´s (81) | Road (61) | Case (49) | Mississippi (41) |
| Fact (123) | Inside (81) | Business (60) | Child (49) | Square (41) |
| Year (120) | Name (80) | Pistol (60) | Cousin (49) | Top (41) |
| Door (118) | Kind (79) | Dark (32/58) | Paper (48) | Trouble (41) |
| Memphis (117) | Word (79) | Voice (58) | Sheriff (48) | Past (10/40) |
| Place (117) | Half (76) | Yoknapatawpha (58) | Summer (47) | Water (40) |
| Negro (116) | Office (76) | Hog (57) | Hope (34/47) | Afternoon (39) |

(Polk, N., Hart, J.D. 1988, pp.1247, 1248).

- Novel # 16 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *The Reivers*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Horse (364) | Mother (72) | Days (52) | Business (38) | Grandfather´s (31) |
| Time (347) | Town (71) | Possum (52) | Light (38) | Hands (31) |
| Miss (323) | Track (71) | Miles (51) | Saturday (38) | Men (31) |
| Man (198) | Train (71) | Moment (51) | Street (38) | Stretch (29/31) |
| Grandfather (171) | Mule (69) | Mules (48) | Word (38) | Thing (31) |
| Automobile (170) | Day (68) | Boss (47) | Inside (37) | Walk (11/31) |
| Hand (148) | Dollars (64) | Course (46) | Pocket (37) | Yesterday (31) |
| Father (143) | Colonel (62) | Fact (46) | Wire (37) | Ladies (30) |
| Race (130) | Tomorrow (61) | Tooth (46) | Law (36) | Lot (30) |
| Lightning (116) | Hell (60) | Shirt (45) | Rest (30/36) | Sunday (30) |
| Home (114) | Horses (60) | Aunt (44) | Work (11/36) | Times (30) |
| Night (110) | Mind (38/60) | Matter (29/44) | Heat (35) | Women (30) |
| Car (108) | Stable (60) | Tonight (44) | Outside (35) | Boxcar (29) |
| Way (108) | Name (59) | Ride (4/43) | Watch (8/35) | Eyes (29) |
| Door (102) | Half (20/58) | Second (43) | Afternoon (34) | Girl (29) |
| Memphis (101) | People (56) | Side (43) | Box (33) | Supper (29) |
| House (100) | Face (55) | Foot (42) | Feet (33) | Top (29) |
| Uncle (100) | Bed (54) | Year (42) | Linscomb (33) | Wheel (29) |
| Jefferson (99) | Grandmother (54) | Call (4/41) | Road (33) | Country (28) |
| Morning (88) | Sleep (19/54) | Pistol (41) | Sense (33) | Square (28) |
| Front (86) | Cousin (53) | Son (41) | Things (33) | Water (28) |
| Boy (84) | Folks (53) | Clothes (40) | Trouble (33) | Whiskey (28) |
| Years (78) | Head (53) | Kind (40) | Creek (31) | Yard (28) |
| Money (74) | Place (53) | Minute (39) | Depot (31) | Automobiles (27) |
| Room (74) | Sir (53) | Virtue (39) | Drive (3/31) | End (27) |

(Polk, N., Hart, J.D. 1990, pp.783,784).

- Short Fiction # 1 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *These Thirteen*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man (340) | Voice (57) | Hair (40) | God (30) | Shoes (23) |
| Time (193) | Way (57) | Subadar (40) | Nigger (30) | Summer (23) |
| Face (143) | Water (53) | Miss (39) | Faces (29) | Week (23) |
| Men (131) | Steamboat (52) | Son (39) | Life (29) | Moment (23) |
| Woman (122) | Feet (51) | Seargeant-Major (38) | Church (28) | Officers (22) |
| Day (109) | Room (51) | German (37) | Work (28) | Paper (22) |
| Eyes (104) | Chair (50) | Man´s (37) | Afternoon (27) | Sleep (22) |
| Father (101) | Women (50) | Place (36) | Ditch (27) | Wine (22) |
| Head (100) | Light (49) | Sir (36) | Glass (27) | Box (21) |
| House (98) | Morning (49) | Earth (35) | Officer (27) | Cabin (21) |
| Door (97) | Dog (48) | Road (35) | Gun (27) | Child (21) |
| Hand (98) | Girl (48) | Watch (35) | Kitchen (26) | Colonel (21) |
| People (85) | Name (48) | Priest (34) | War (26) | Grandfather (21) |
| Home (79) | Second (48) | Rose (34) | Wife (26) | Grave (21) |
| Dead (77) | Air (47) | Side (34) | Bottle (25) | Jefferson (21) |
| Sergeant (76) | Fire (47) | Darkness (33) | Horse (25) | Mud (21) |
| Years (73) | Wall (46) | Mouth (33) | River (25) | Negroes (21) |
| Captain (72) | Dust (46) | Shop (33) | Bar (24) | Word (21) |
| Negro (72) | Mother (44) | Soldier (33) | Children (24) | April (20) |
| Sound (67) | Major (43) | Arm (32) | Stick (24) | Battalion (20) |
| Dark (66) | Barber (42) | Floor (32) | Walls (24) | Clothes (20) |
| Wind (64) | Town (42) | Window (32) | Berry (23) | English (20) |
| Night (63) | Year (42) | Body (31) | Bottom (23) | Food (20) |
| Days (58) | Bed (41) | Drink (31) | Fence (23) | French (20) |
| Hands (57) | Street (41) | Car (30) | Love (23) | Ground (20) |

(Polk 1990, pp.2999-3000).

- Short Fiction # 2 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *Dr. Martino and Other Stories*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man (501) | Way (81) | Land (43) | Folks (34) | Business (29) |
| Face (289) | Hands (70) | Air (42) | Office (34) | End (29) |
| Time (277) | Dark (86) | Half (42) | Year (34) | Floor (29) |
| Boy (205) | Spoke (67) | Morning (41) | Pay (33) | Ring (29) |
| Father (163) | Chair (64) | Afternoon (40) | Road (33) | Stick (29) |
| Hand (162) | Water (64) | Instant (39) | Ship (33) | Uncle (29) |
| House (145) | Sound (63) | Money (39) | Smoke (33) | Path (28) |
| Woman (130) | Mother (60) | Airplane (38) | Expression (32) | Bench (27) |
| Day (129) | Secretary (60) | God (38) | Foot (32) | Chauffeur (27) |
| Horse (128) | Feet (59) | Mouth (38) | Fox (32) | Darkness (27) |
| Years (128) | Moment (55) | Side (38) | Miss (32) | Earth (27) |
| Men (126) | Boat (53) | War (38) | Sir (32) | Glass (27) |
| Voice (126) | Life (53) | Wife (38) | Fool (31) | Sleep (27) |
| Negro (122) | Child (52) | Brother (37) | Shoulder (31) | Thing (27) |
| Door (115) | Bed (51) | Hair (37) | Son (31) | Wheel (27) |
| Eyes (110) | Field (50) | Paper (37) | Box (30) | Word (27) |
| Night (102) | Town (49) | Wagon (37) | Country (30) | Blood (26) |
| Head (101) | Horses (48) | Women (37) | English (30) | Fence (26) |
| Home (101) | Place (48) | Ladder (36) | Grave (30) | Quality (26) |
| Judge (95) | Guess (47) | Arm (35) | Guest (30) | Street (26) |
| President (93) | Light (46) | Grandmother (35) | Hat (30) | Despair (25) |
| Room (93) | People (46) | Show (35) | Second (30) | Dogs (25) |
| Table (91) | Girl (44) | Week (35) | Wall (30) | Fire (25) |
| Dead (86) | Window (44) | Body (34) | Watch (30) | Ground (25) |
| Car (83) | Captain (43) | Cigarette (34) | Barn (29) | Hour (25) |

(Polk 1990, pp.3048-3049).

- Short Fiction # 3 -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in *The Collected Stories*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man (979) | Mother (185) | Son (115) | Street (91) | Sergeant (75) |
| Time (740) | Negro (184) | Air (111) | Arm (90) | Week (75) |
| Face (529) | Water (178) | Side (110) | Dollars (89) | Coat (74) |
| House (436) | Table (175) | Wife (110) | Pap (89) | Steamboat (74) |
| Day (363) | Horse (174) | Secretary (109) | Cousin (88) | Church (73) |
| Men (353) | Morning (172) | Second (107) | Earth (87) | Jefferson (73) |
| Door (350) | Hands (167) | Dog (105) | Folks (86) | Corner (72) |
| Father (348) | Car (165) | Life (105) | Papa (86) | Field (72) |
| Hand (326) | Doom (165) | Watch (104) | Move (85) | Floor (72) |
| Night (305) | Sound (159) | Afternoon (102) | Horses (84) | Hat (72) |
| Woman (291) | Name (153) | Major (102) | Nigger (83) | Boys (71) |
| Years (279) | Money (148) | Hair (101) | Wall (83) | Job (71) |
| Eyes (278) | Light (140) | Moment (101) | Miss (82) | Soldier (71) |
| Uncle (277) | Feet (136) | Work (101) | Rose (82) | Dust (69) |
| Home (270) | Chair (130) | Aunt (100) | Sleep (82) | Glass (69) |
| Boy (251) | Days (127) | Mouth (100) | Walk (81) | Minute (69) |
| Head (247) | Captain (126) | Pappy (100) | Drink (80) | Shoulder (69) |
| Voice (211) | Fire (123) | God (99) | Past (79) | Country (68) |
| Way (203) | Half (119) | President (98) | Children (78) | Fence (68) |
| Town (199) | Window (118) | Road (97) | Business (77) | Summer (67) |
| Room (195) | Women (117) | Paper (94) | Smell (77) | Show (67) |
| Bed (191) | Year (117) | Child (93) | Pay (76) | Tomorrow (67) |
| People (190) | Place (116) | Kitchen (93) | Wind (76) | Boat (66) |
| Dark (186) | Girl (115) | War (93) | Body (75) | Faces (65) |
| Dead (186) | Sister (115) | Mule (91) | Memphis (75) | Man’s (65) |

(Polk, N., Hart, D. 1990, pp.2933-2941).

- Short Fiction # 4 (Part I /II) -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in the “Stories Revised for later Books“ and “Uncollected Stories“ sections of the *Uncollected Stories*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Time (486) | Way (122) | Major (80) | Air (63) | Cabin (55) |
| Still (427) | Dark (120) | Side (80) | Bear (63) | Children (55) |
| Man (413) | Bed (114) | Aunt (78) | Lion (63) | Gate (55) |
| Granny (352) | Horses (113) | Hill (78) | Trees (63) | Body (54) |
| Father (252) | Water (113) | Camp (77) | Arm (62) | Ride (54) |
| Horse (250) | Money (110) | Fence (77) | Life (62) | Food (52) |
| Hand (243) | Feet (109) | Doctor (75) | Porch (62) | Texas (52) |
| House (237) | Light (108) | Window (75) | Rain (62) | Child (51) |
| Day (234) | Hands (107) | Pistol (74) | Blood (61) | Bottom (50) |
| Uncle (229) | Gun (106) | Miles (72) | Earth (61) | Clothes (50) |
| Face (223) | Nigger (106) | Dead (70) | Hair (61) | Floor (50) |
| Wagon (220) | Dogs (105) | God (70) | River (61) | Memphis (50) |
| Home (201) | Mister (101) | Cotton (69) | Second (61) | Shirt (50) |
| Men (198) | Room (100) | Jefferson (69) | Tomorrow (61) | Niggers (49) |
| Eyes (197) | Woman (100) | Mouth (69) | Paper (60) | Team (49) |
| Head (183) | Dollars (96) | Name (69) | Sun (60) | Land (48) |
| Night (171) | Chair (92) | Sir (69) | Folks (59) | Mother (48) |
| Door (183) | Place (91) | Thing (69) | Kitchen (59) | Shoulder (48) |
| Road (160) | Car (90) | Country (67) | Moment (59) | Store (48) |
| Years (158) | Hundred (88) | Woods (67) | Women (57) | Week (48) |
| Mules (150) | Boy (87) | Watch (66) | Dust (56) | Box (47) |
| Town (130) | Hat (82) | Afternoon (65) | Hog (56) | Rope (47) |
| Morning (129) | Year (81) | Ground (65) | People (56) | Officer (46) |
| Mule (124) | Days (80) | Wife (65) | Sleep (56) | Shoot (46) |
| Voice (123) | Fire (80) | Boys (64) | Yankees (56) | Coat (45) |

(Polk 1990 (b), pp.2998-2999).

- Short Fiction # 4 (Part II /II) -
A statistic of the most frequently occurring nouns in the "Previously Unplublished Stories" section of the *Uncollected Stories*.

| I. | II. | III. | IV. | V. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man (205) | War (57) | Train (39) | Folks (30) | Months (25) |
| Time (187) | Cold (55) | Kitchen (38) | Memphis (30) | Pistol (25) |
| House (179) | Dog (55) | Moment (38) | Mouth (30) | Rain (25) |
| Still (157) | Women (55) | Light (37) | Road (30) | Week (25) |
| Face (154) | Feet (54) | Afternoon (36) | Land (29) | Box (24) |
| Woman (116) | People (54) | Ball (36) | Negroes (29) | Church (24) |
| Door (113) | Dead (53) | Hair (35) | Niggers (29) | Course (/24) |
| Day (112) | Boy (52) | Mind (35) | Window (29) | Faces (24) |
| Years (105) | Hands (51) | Dress (34) | Bed (28) | Glass (24) |
| Home (101) | Money (51) | Rose (34) | Flesh (28) | Guards (24) |
| Mother (88) | Year (51) | Snow (34) | Horse (28) | Mississippi (24) |
| Hand (85) | Body (50) | Watch (34) | Letter (28) | Past (24) |
| Eyes (81) | Sound (50) | Side (33) | Paris (28) | Sir (24) |
| Voice (80) | Car (49) | Station (33) | Girls (27) | Coat (23) |
| Night (76) | Office (49) | Stick (33) | Spring (27) | Cook (23) |
| Room (76) | Negro (46) | Camel (32) | Wall (27) | Summer (23) |
| Men (73) | Life (45) | God (32) | Work (27) | Bottle (22) |
| Dark (70) | Days (44) | Hat (32) | End (26) | Doctor (22) |
| Way (66) | Table (44) | City (31) | Floor (26) | Dogs (22) |
| Water (65) | Morning (43) | Country (31) | Girl (26) | Fact (22) |
| Well (64) | Place (43) | Paper (31) | Nigger (26) | Nose (22) |
| Name (62) | Town (42) | Shot (31) | Picture (26) | Things (22) |
| Father (61) | Wife (41) | Arm (30) | Tonight (26) | Change (21) |
| Head (60) | Chair (40) | Child (30) | Air (25) | Colonel (21) |
| Street (57) | Daughter (39) | Desk (30) | Boss (25) | Earth (21) |

(Polk 1990 (b), pp.3060-3061).

## Ehrenwörtliche Erklärung

Ich versichere, dass ich die vorliegende Doktorarbeit ohne Hilfe Dritter und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel angefertigt and die den benutzten Quellen wörtlich oder inhaltlich entnommenen Stellen als solche kenntlich gemacht habe.
Diese Arbeit hat in gleicher oder in ähnlicher Form noch keiner Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegen.

Osnabrück, den 30.08.2007

Dirk Bork